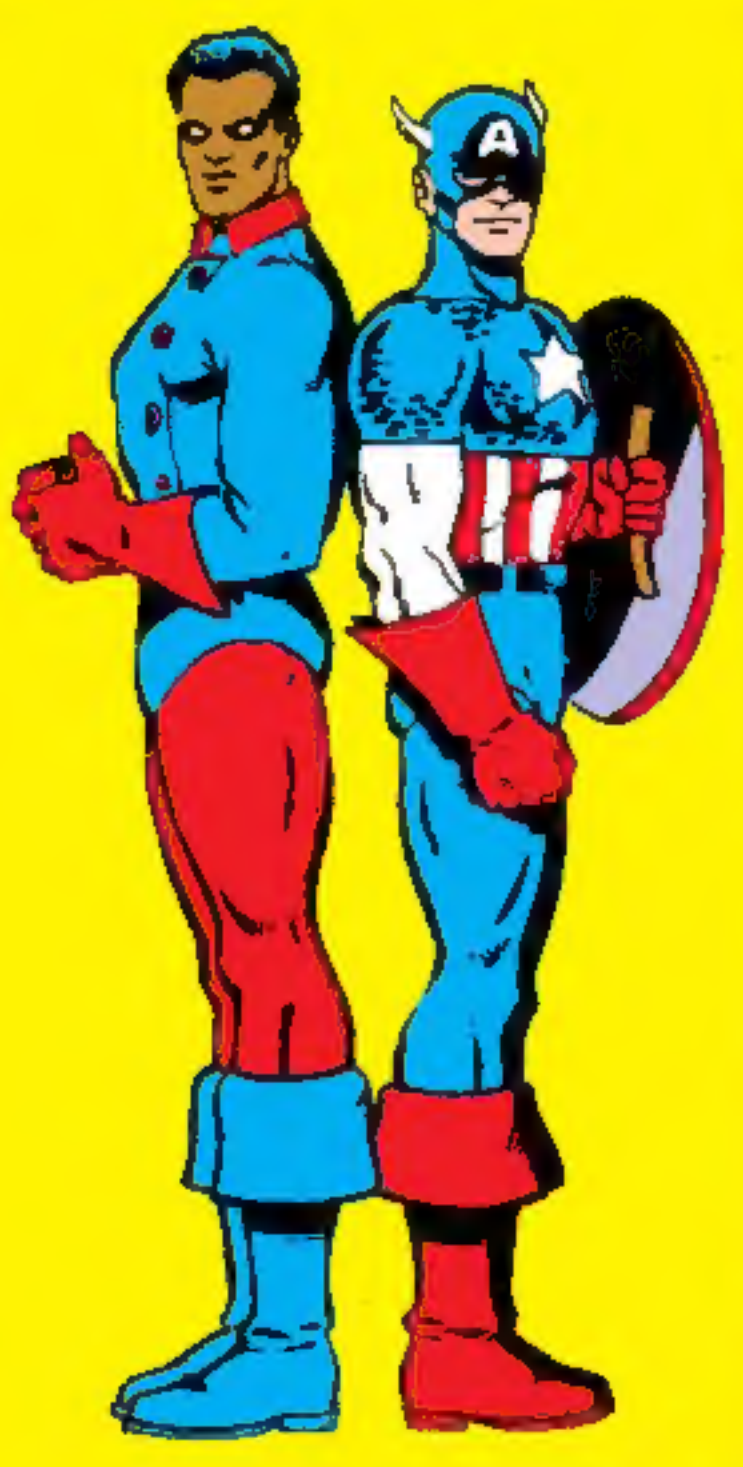


MARVEL®



CAPTAIN AMERICA

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APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

**FALL
OF THE
MUTANTS™
TIE-IN**



**AMERICA
THE
SCORCHED!**

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

CAPTAIN AMERICA

HER SHRIEK IS
THE SOUND OF
GLASS SHARDS
SCRAPING BRITTLE
BONE.

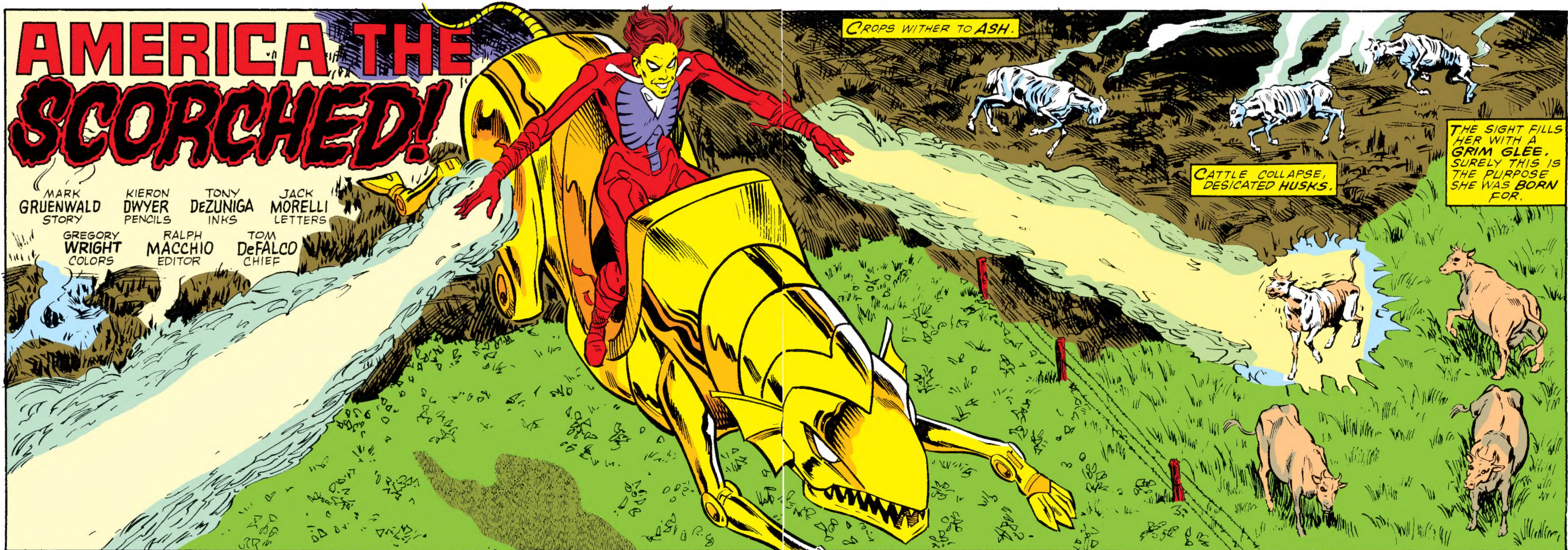
HER EYES ARE SHALLOW
POOLS OF SLUGS
FEASTING ON THEIR OWN
ENTRAILS.

HER FLESH IS
PALID PARCH-
MENT STRETCHED
ACROSS ATRO-
PHIED MUSCLE
AND PROTRUDING
SKELETON.

HER MOUNT
IS A STAINLESS
STEEL MON-
STROSITY, BORN
OF LOCUSTS
AND DENTISTS'
DRILLS.

HER HANDS
ARE SICKLES
CULTIVATING
BLIGHT.

HER NAME IS **FAMINE**
AND SHE HAS COME TO
DESTROY AMERICA!



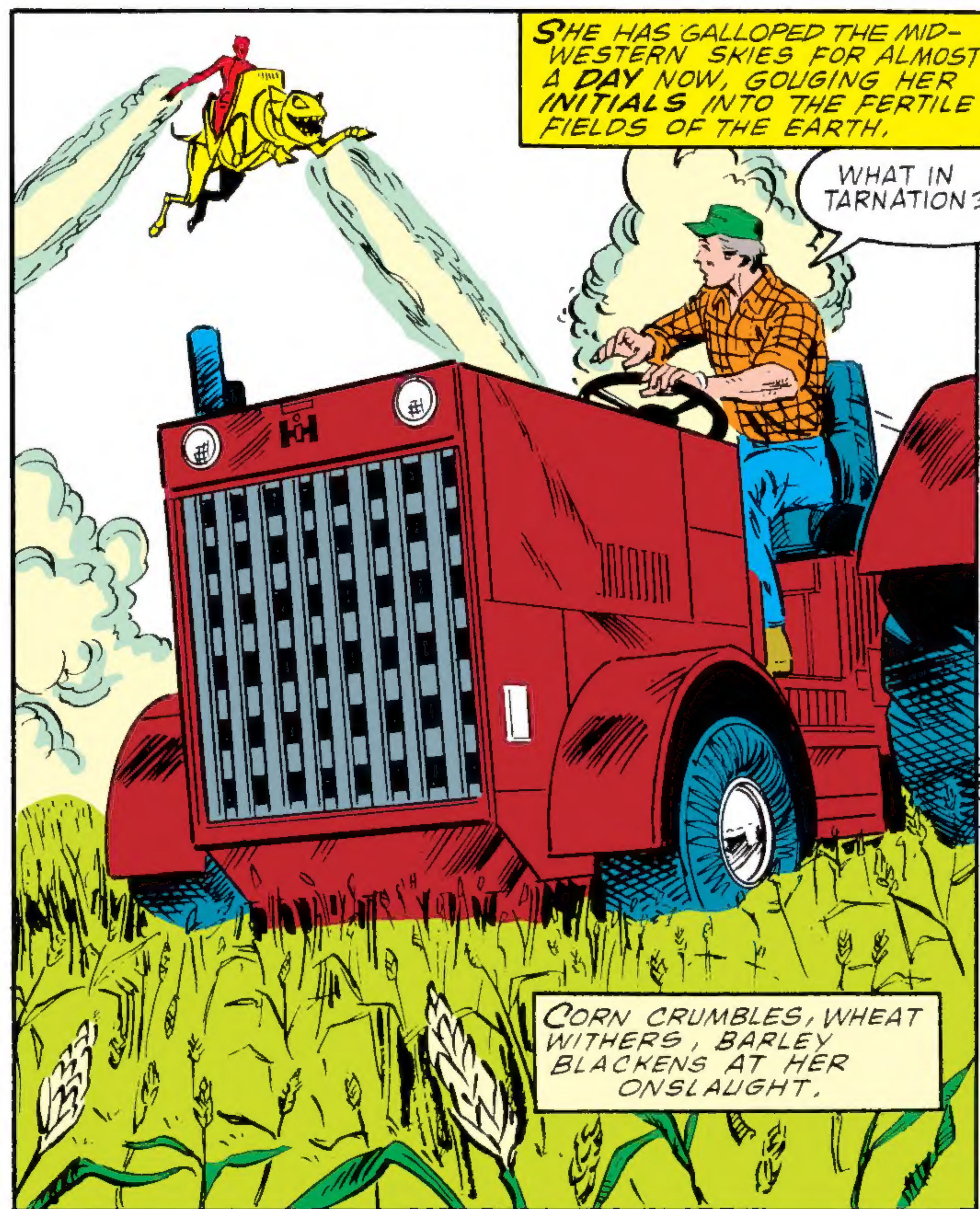
AMERICA THE SCORCHED!

MARK GRUENWALD STORY
KIERON DWYER PENCILS
TONY DEZUNIGA INKS
JACK MORELLI LETTERS
GREGORY WRIGHT COLORS
RALPH MACCHIO EDITOR
TOM DeFALCO CHIEF

CROPS WITHER TO ASH.

CATTLE COLLAPSE, DESICATED HUSKS.

THE SIGHT FILLS HER WITH A GRIM GLEE. SURELY THIS IS THE PURPOSE SHE WAS BORN FOR.



SHE HAS GALLOPED THE MID-WESTERN SKIES FOR ALMOST A DAY NOW, GOUGING HER INITIALS INTO THE FERTILE FIELDS OF THE EARTH.

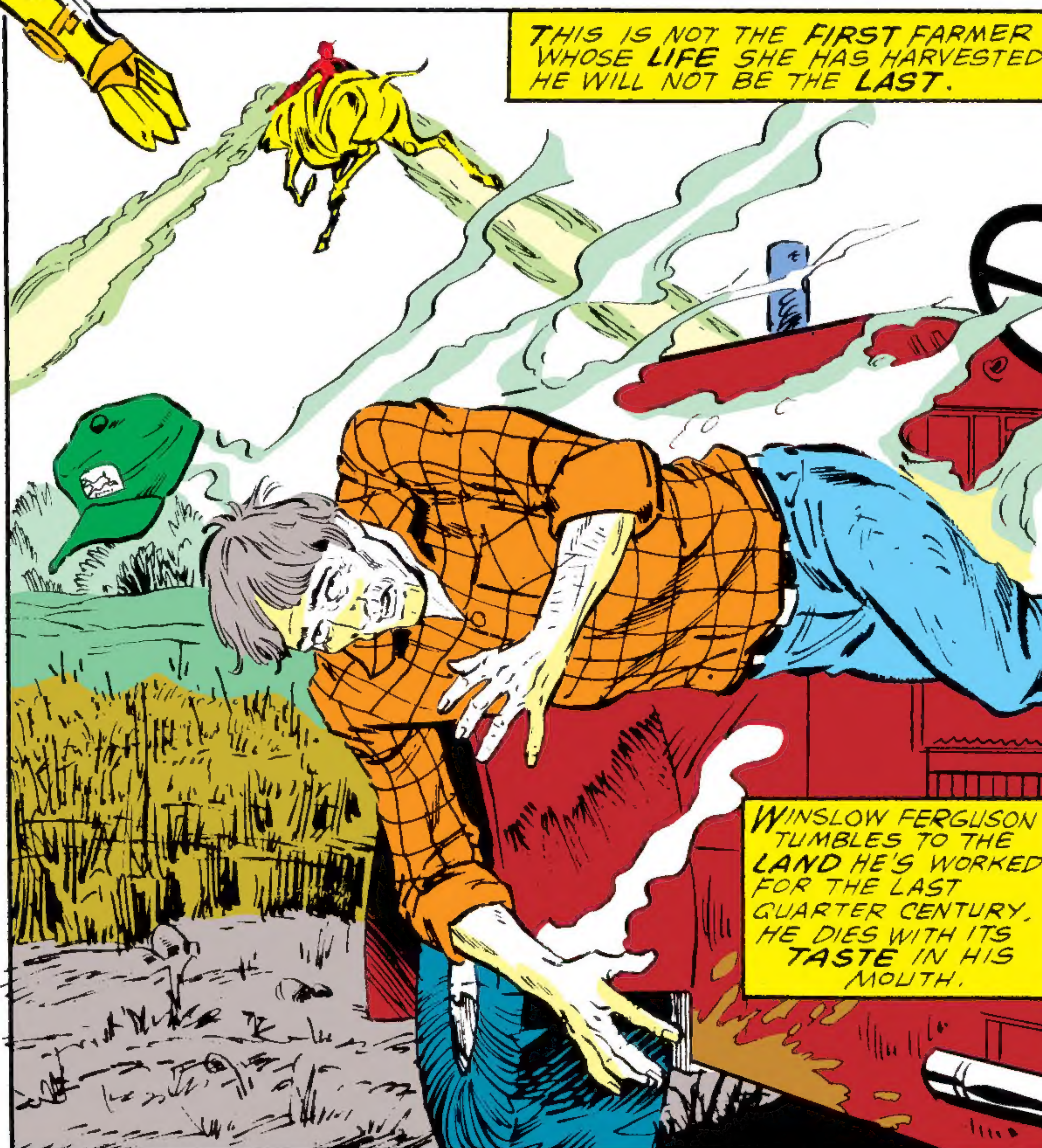
WHAT IN TARNATION?!?

CORN CRUMBLES, WHEAT WITHERS, BARLEY BLACKENS AT HER ONSLAUGHT.



AND FLESH.

FLESH SHRIVELS, DECAYS, ERODES!



THIS IS NOT THE FIRST FARMER WHOSE LIFE SHE HAS HARVESTED. HE WILL NOT BE THE LAST.

WINSLOW FERGUSON TUMBLES TO THE LAND HE'S WORKED FOR THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY. HE DIES WITH ITS TASTE IN HIS MOUTH.



FAMINE DOES NOT LOOK BACK. HER MUTANT BODY NOURISHED BY UNFATHOMABLE FURIES, SHE TRAMPLES ON.

SHE HAS ACRES AND ACRES AND ACRES TO DEVASTATE, AND EACH HORSEMAN OF THE APOCALYPSE, ONCE LOOSE, MUST RIDE!

ELSEWHERE, A MAN IS IN THE THROES OF A NIGHTMARE.

THE CHAMBER HE IS IN IS CAVERNOUS AND DARK, FULL OF DANCING SHADOWS AND HOLLOW ECHOES.

THE FOE HE FIGHTS IS A GIANT IN AN IMMACULATE GREY THREE-PIECE SUIT.

QUONK

THE AUDIENCE WHO WATCHES IS AS STILL AND SILENT AS STATUARY ON A TOMB.

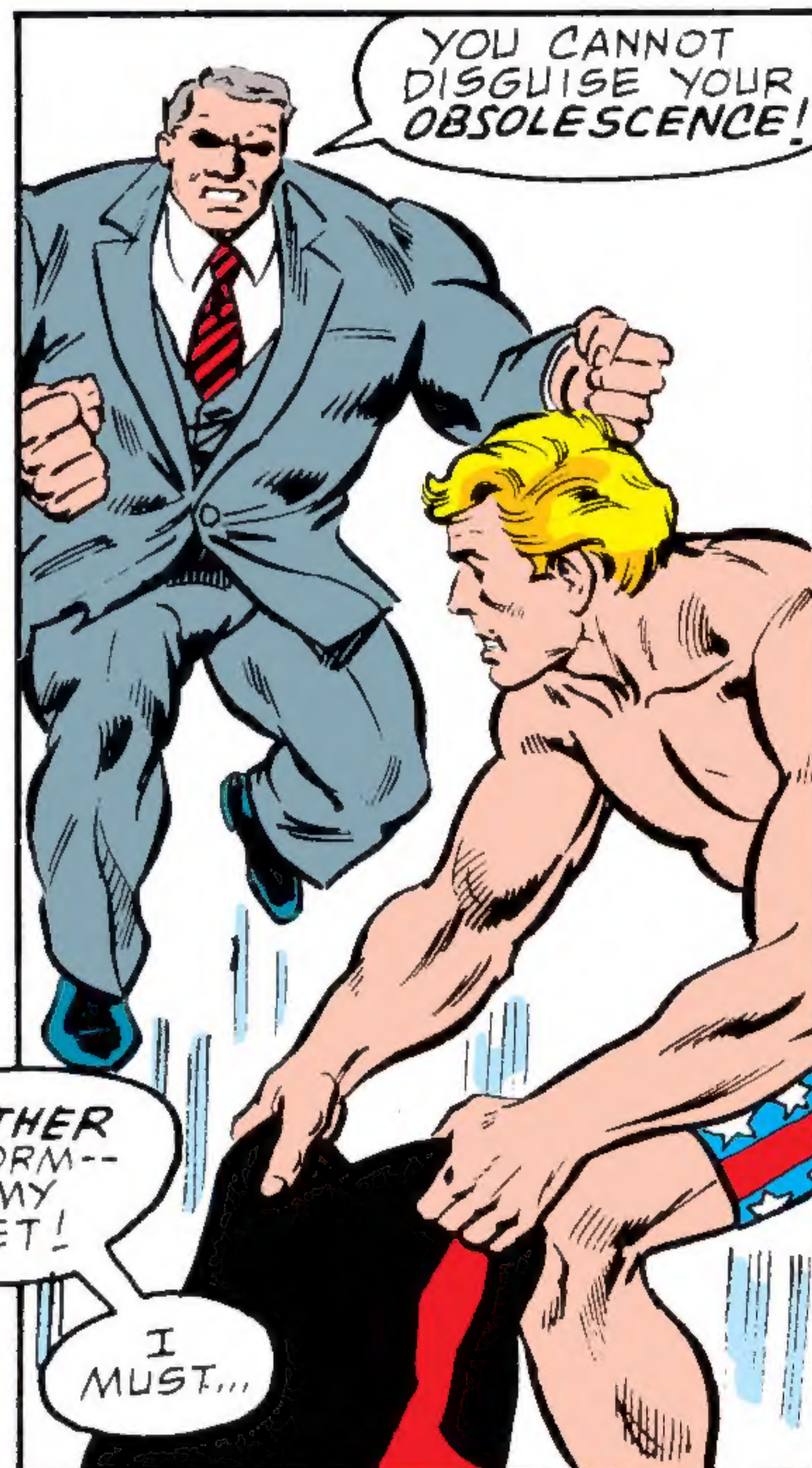
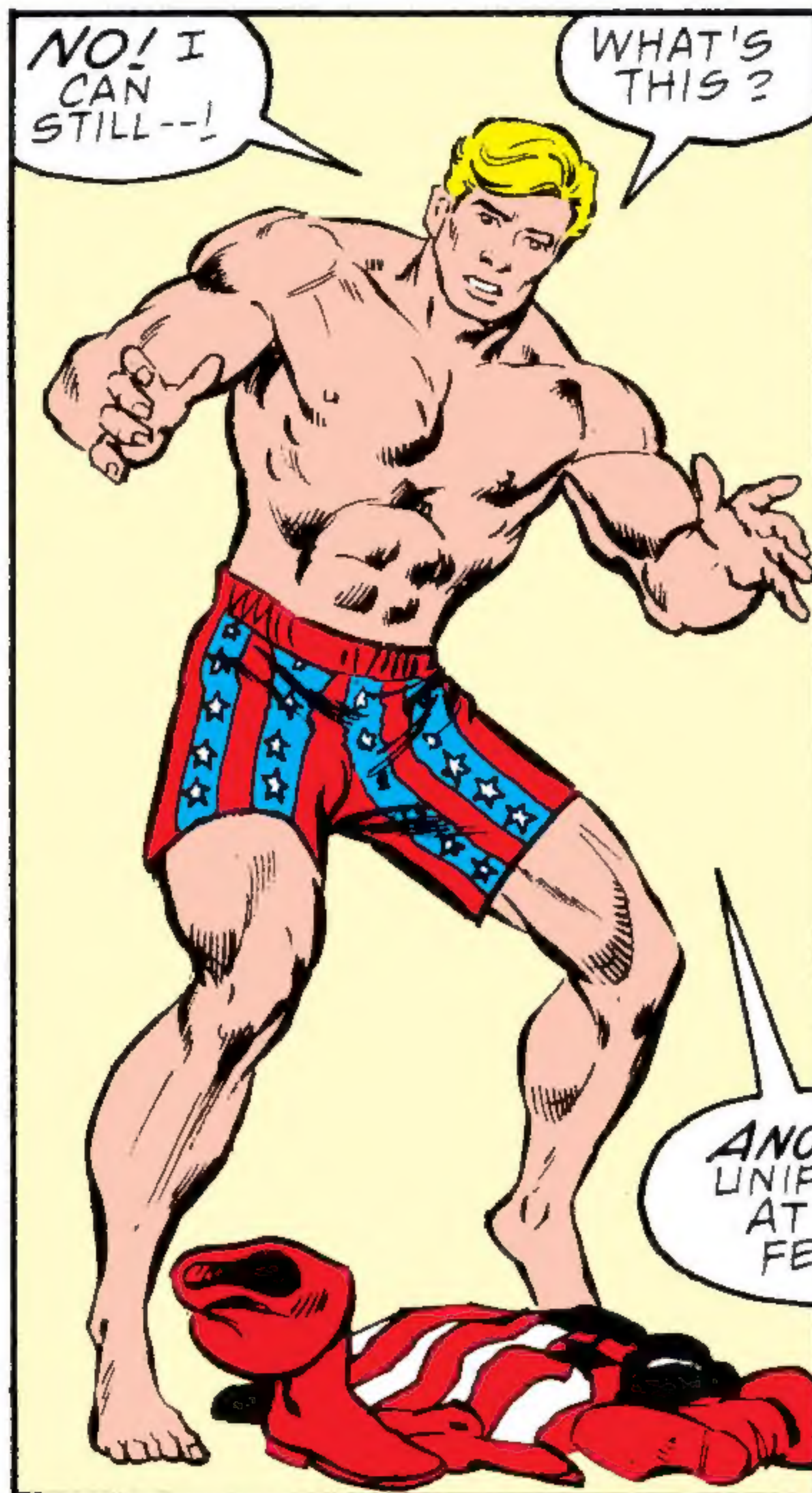
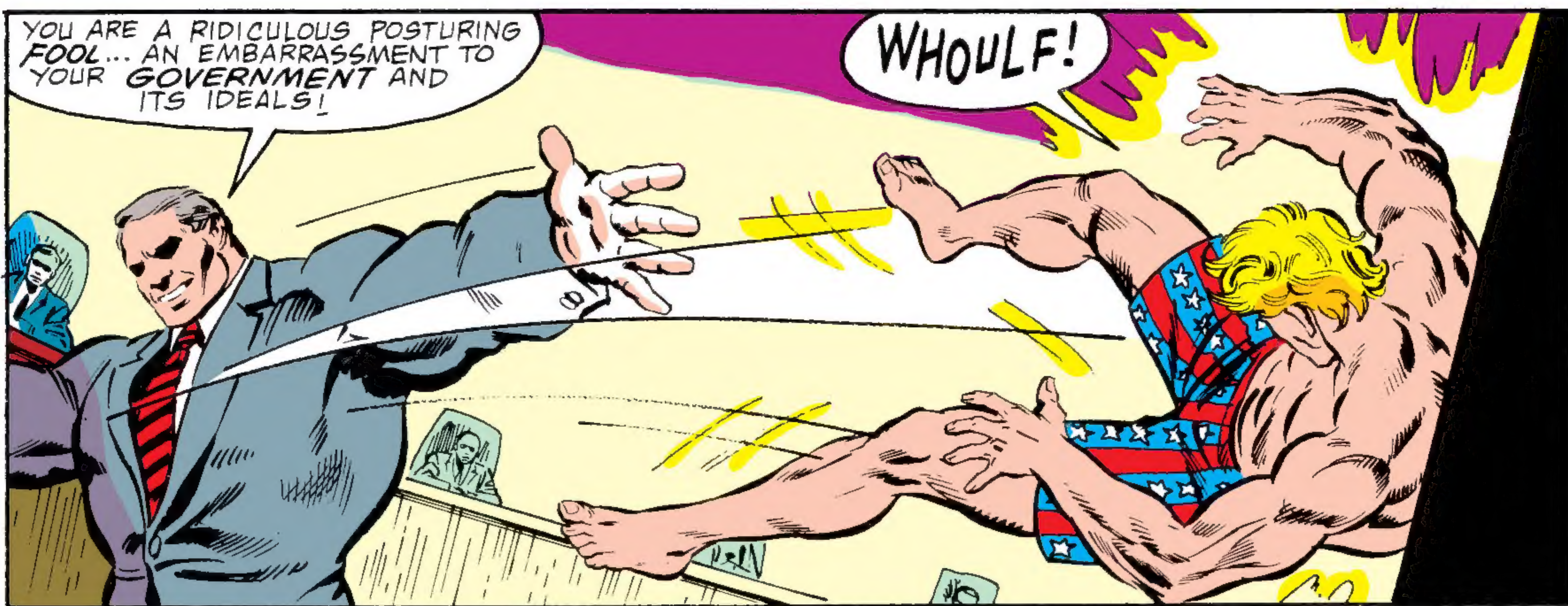
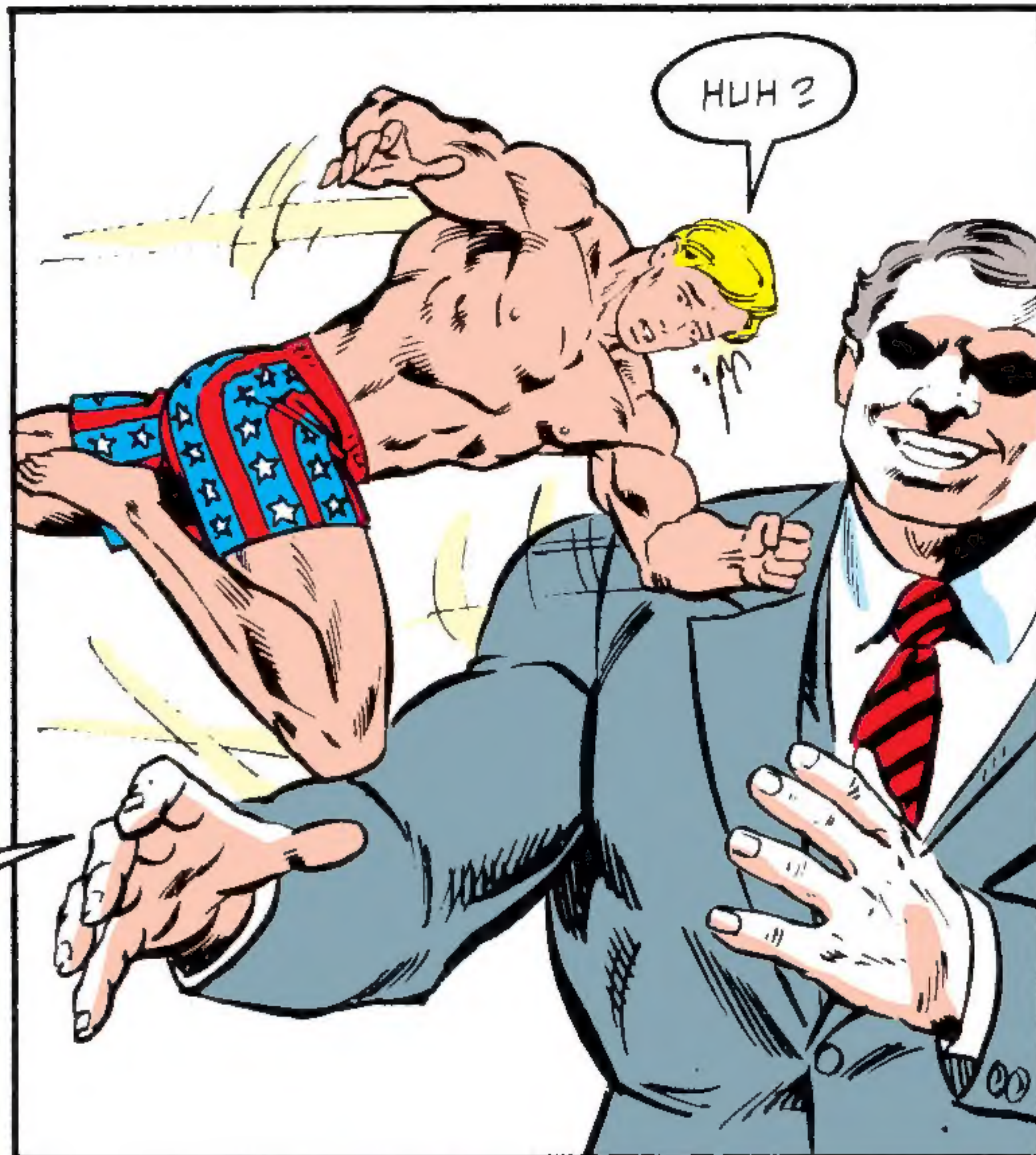
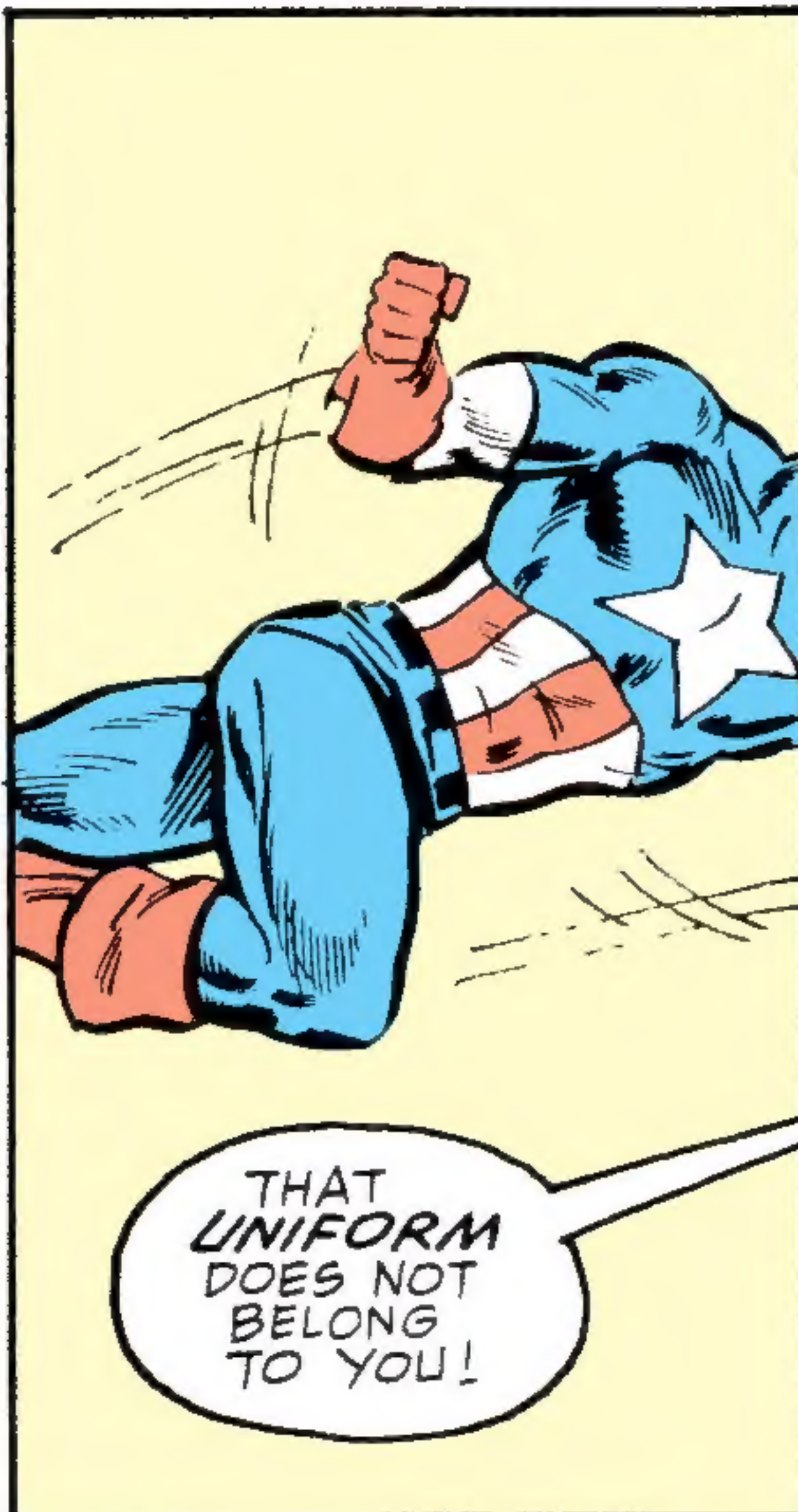
THE MAN IN THE COSTUME IS CAPTAIN AMERICA!

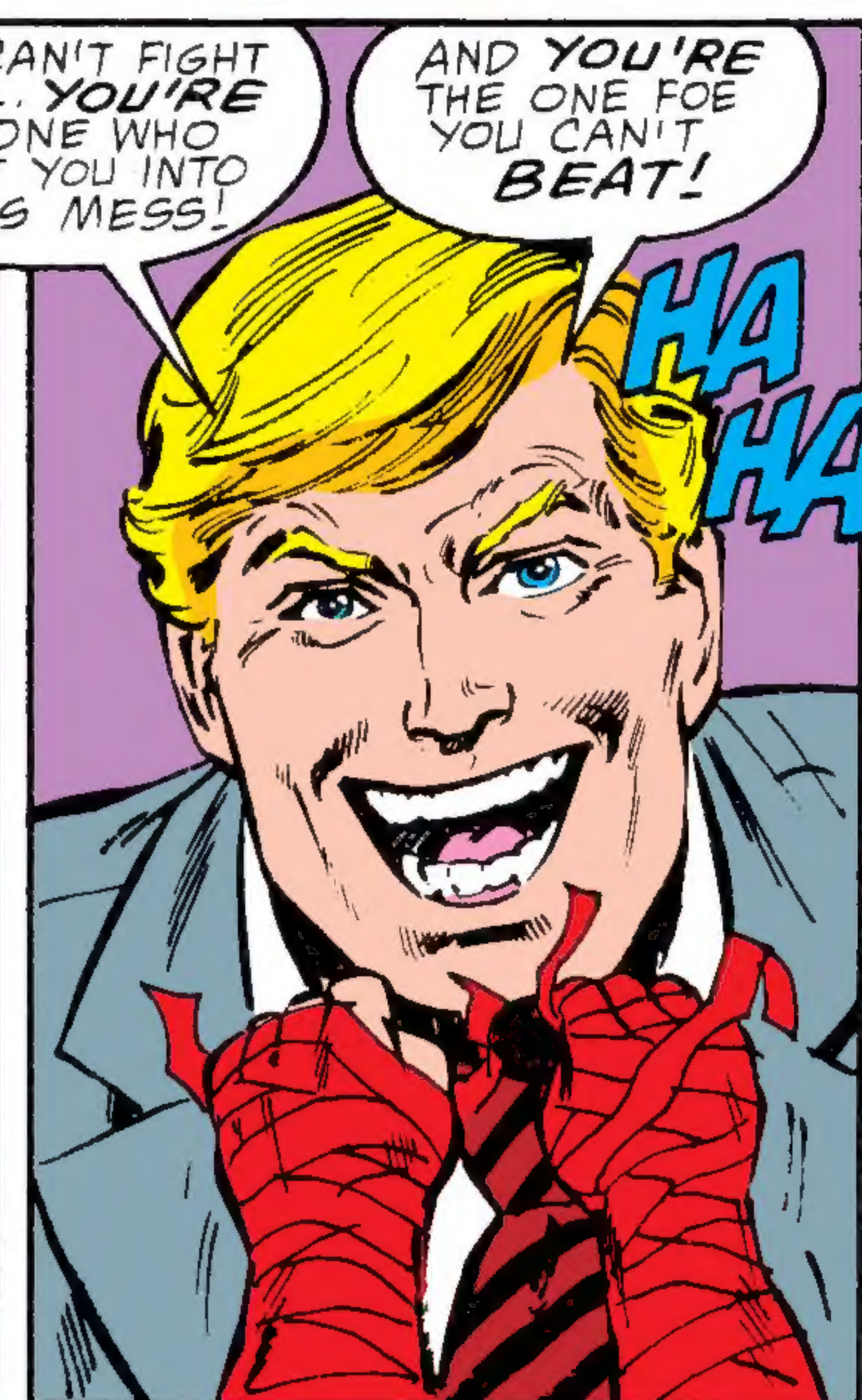
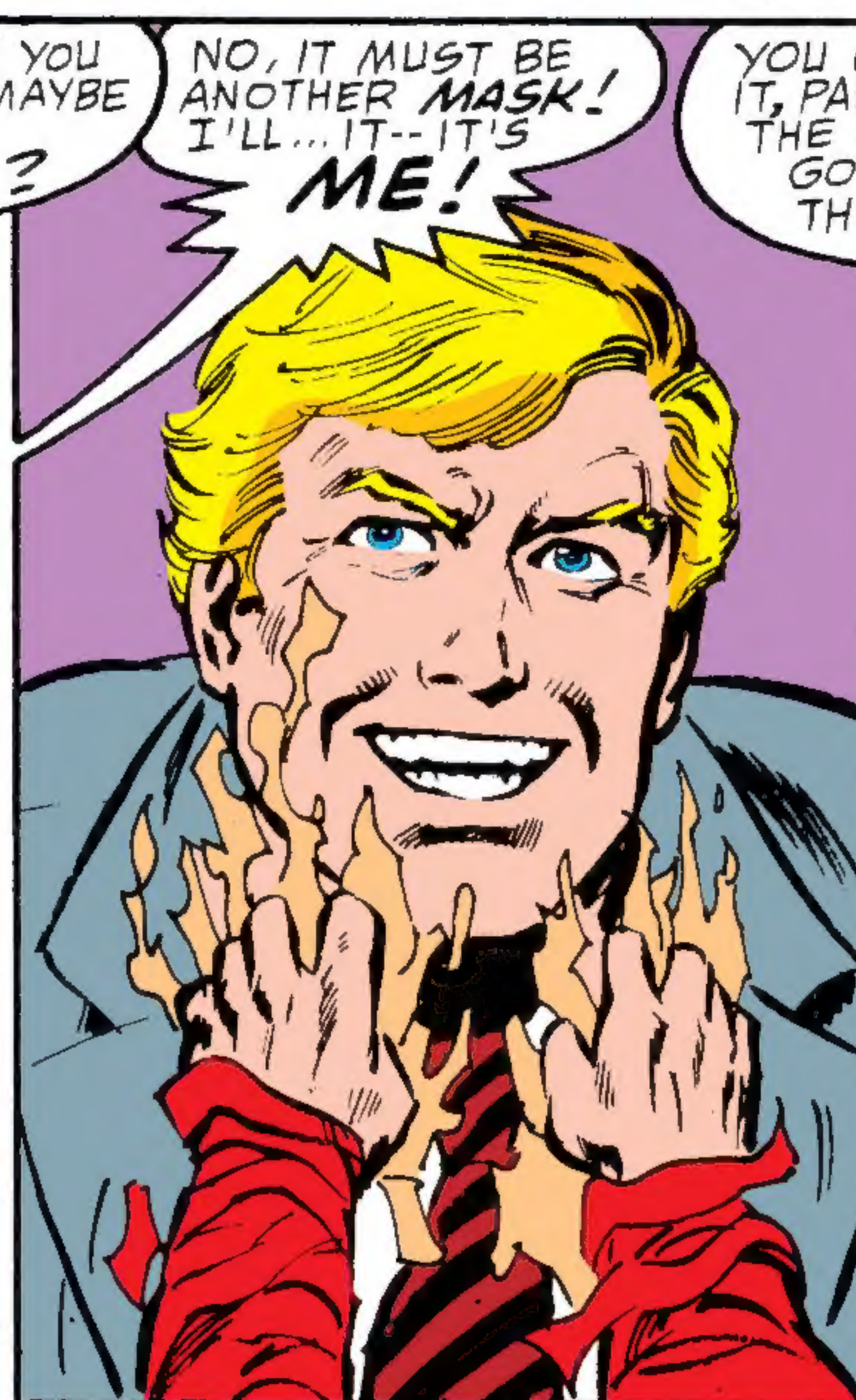
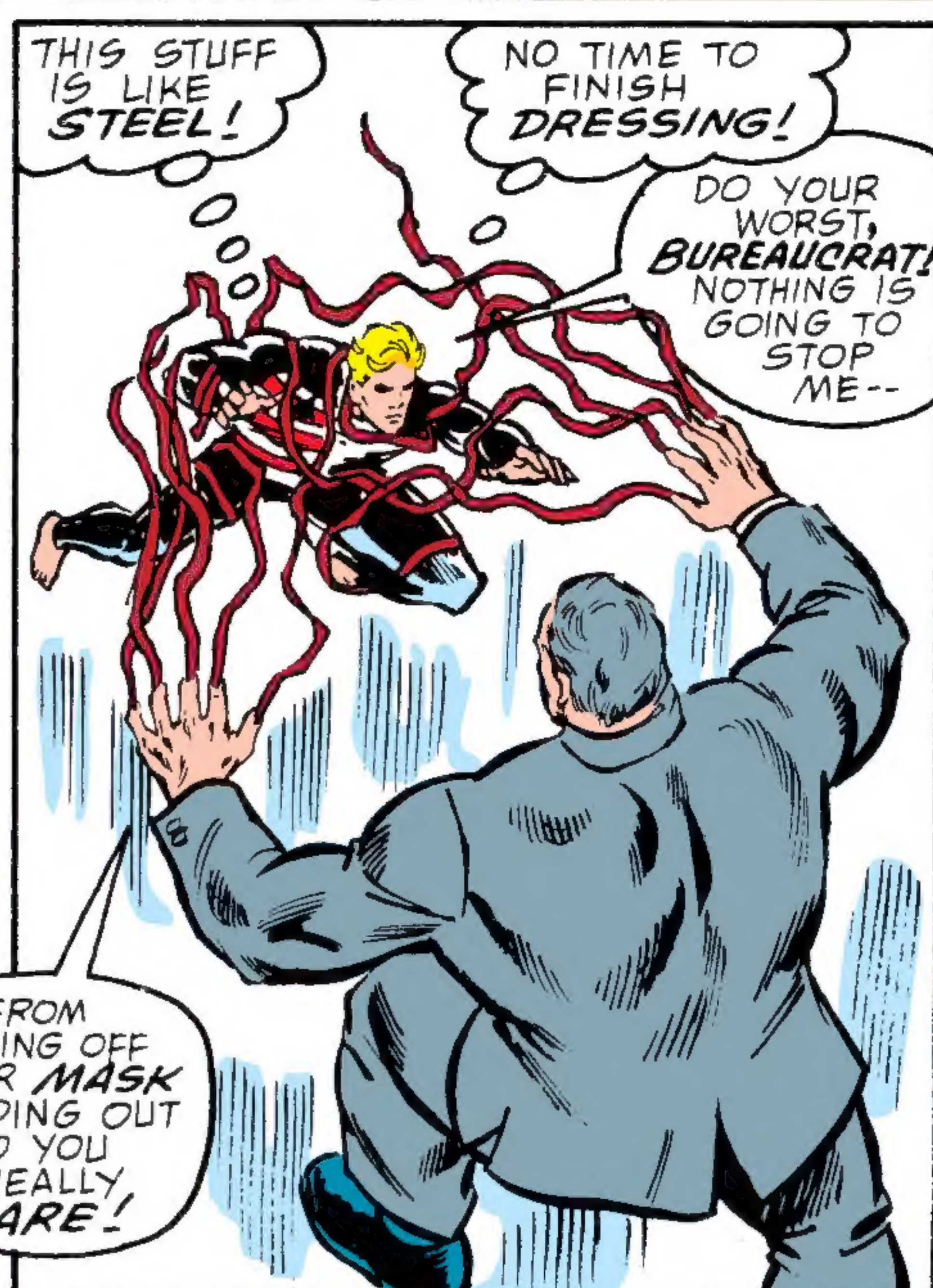
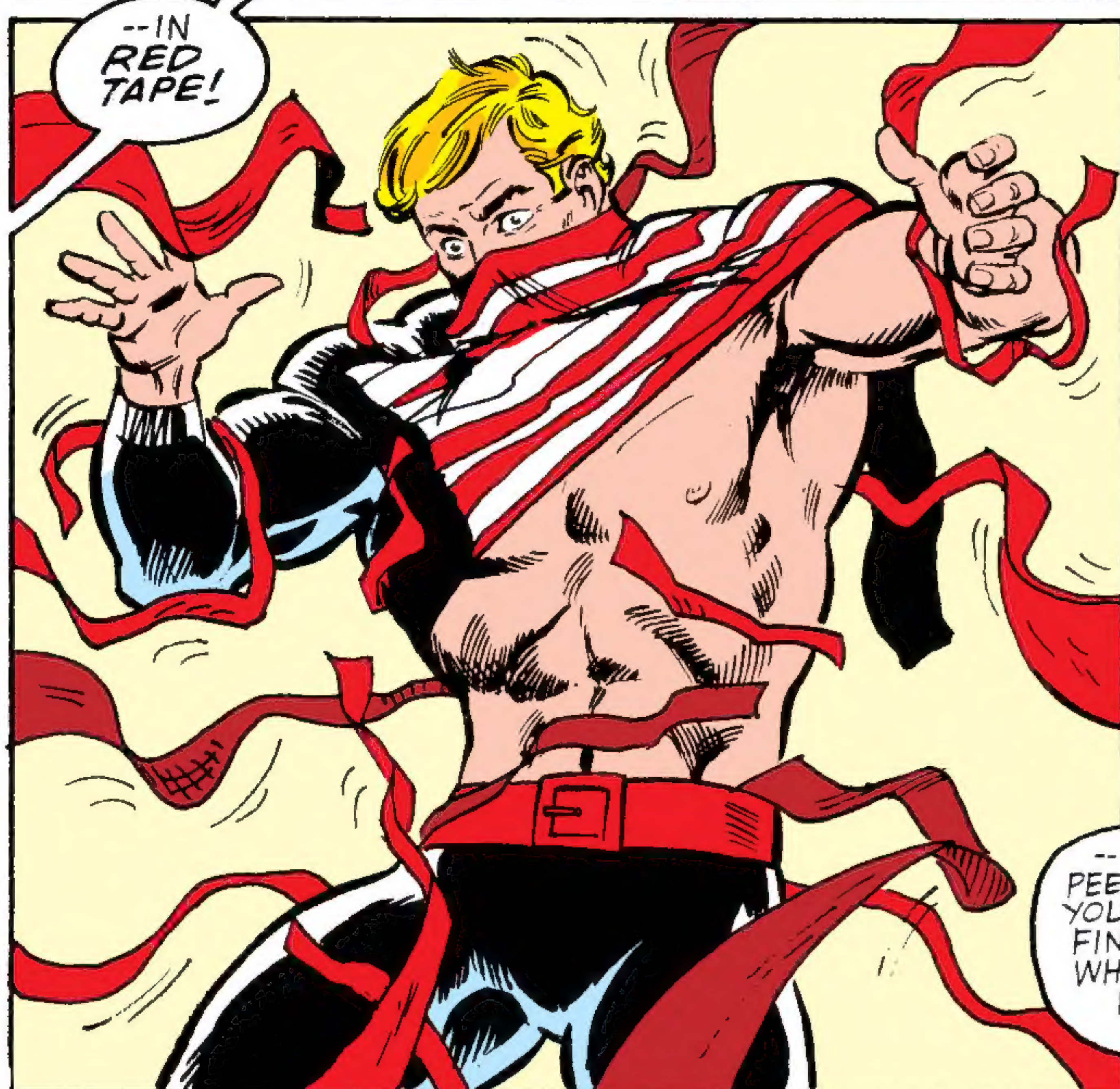
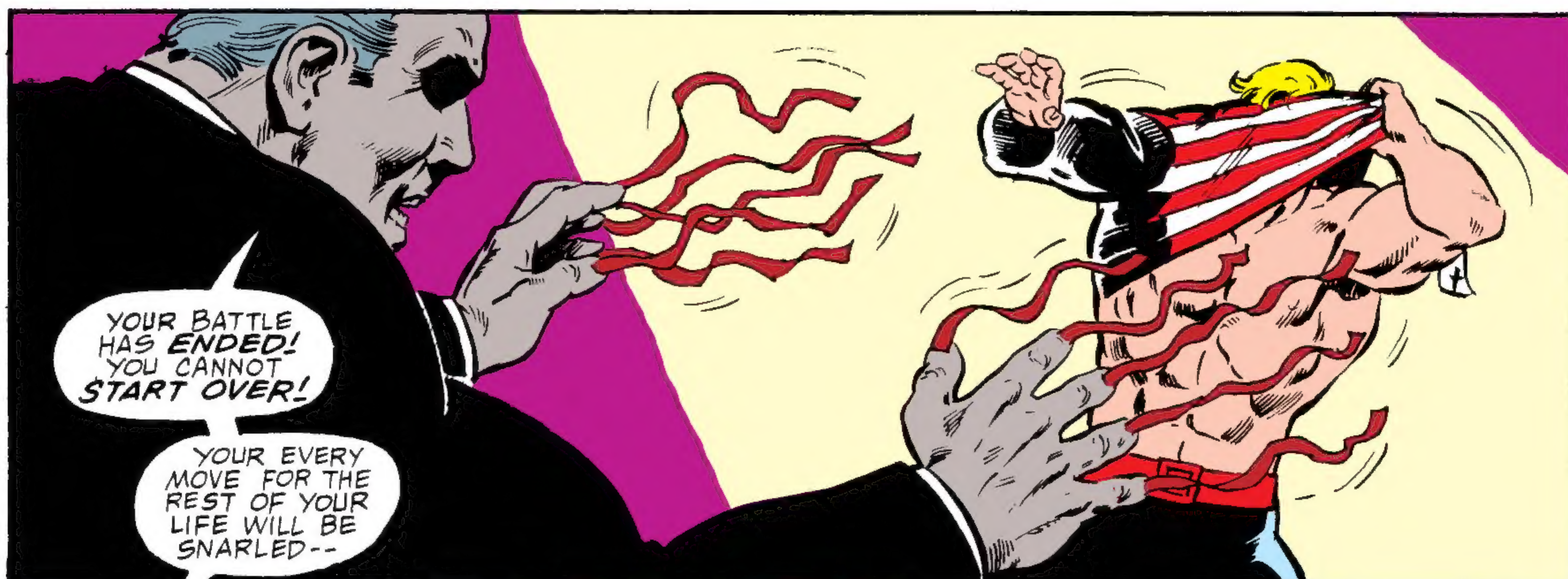
AND TODAY, HE REVISITS THE SCENE OF HIS GREATEST LOSS. A LOSS THAT GNAWS AT THE CENTER OF HIS BEING!

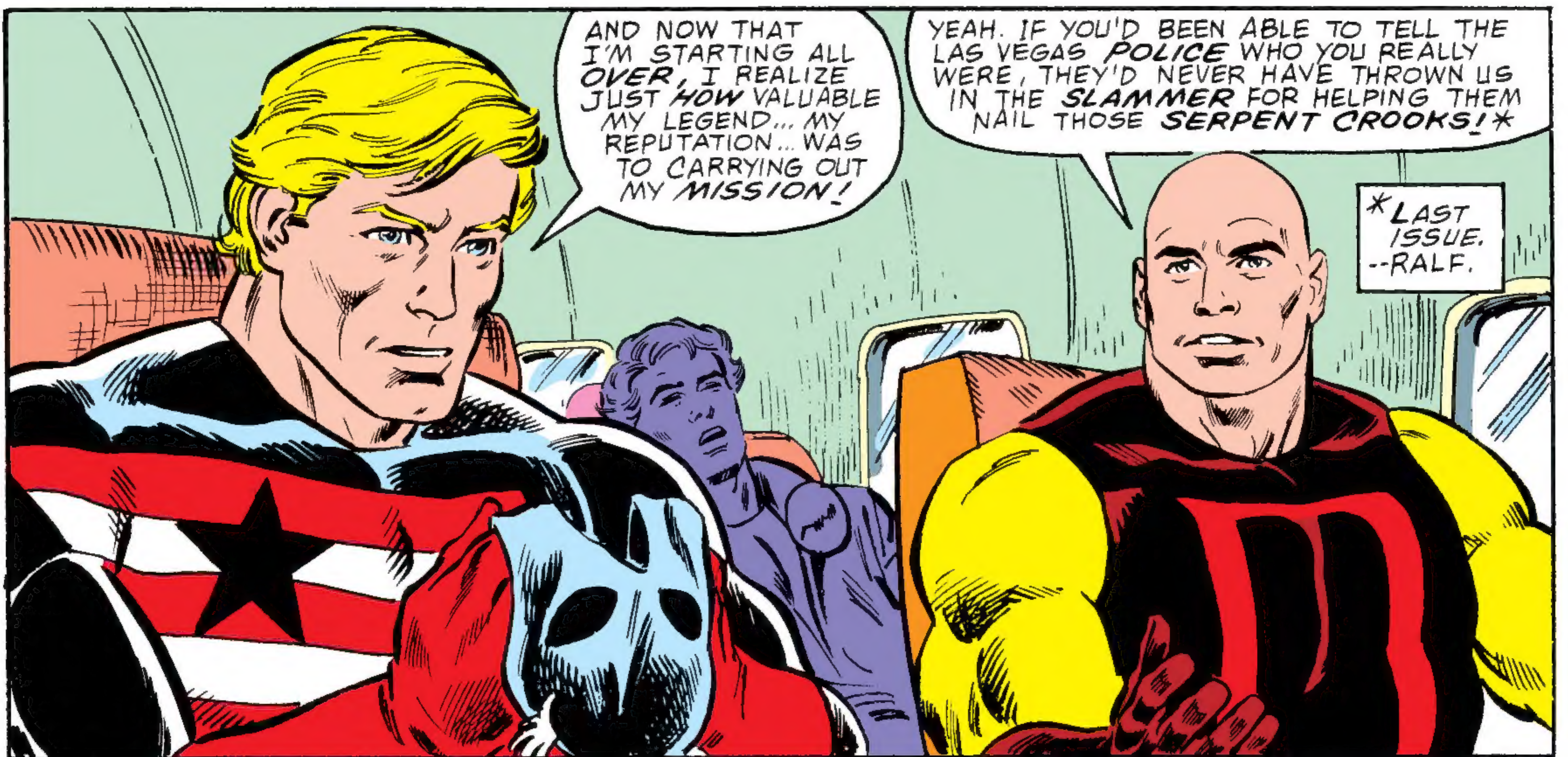
THAT SHIELD DOES NOT BELONG TO YOU.

WHA--? IT--!





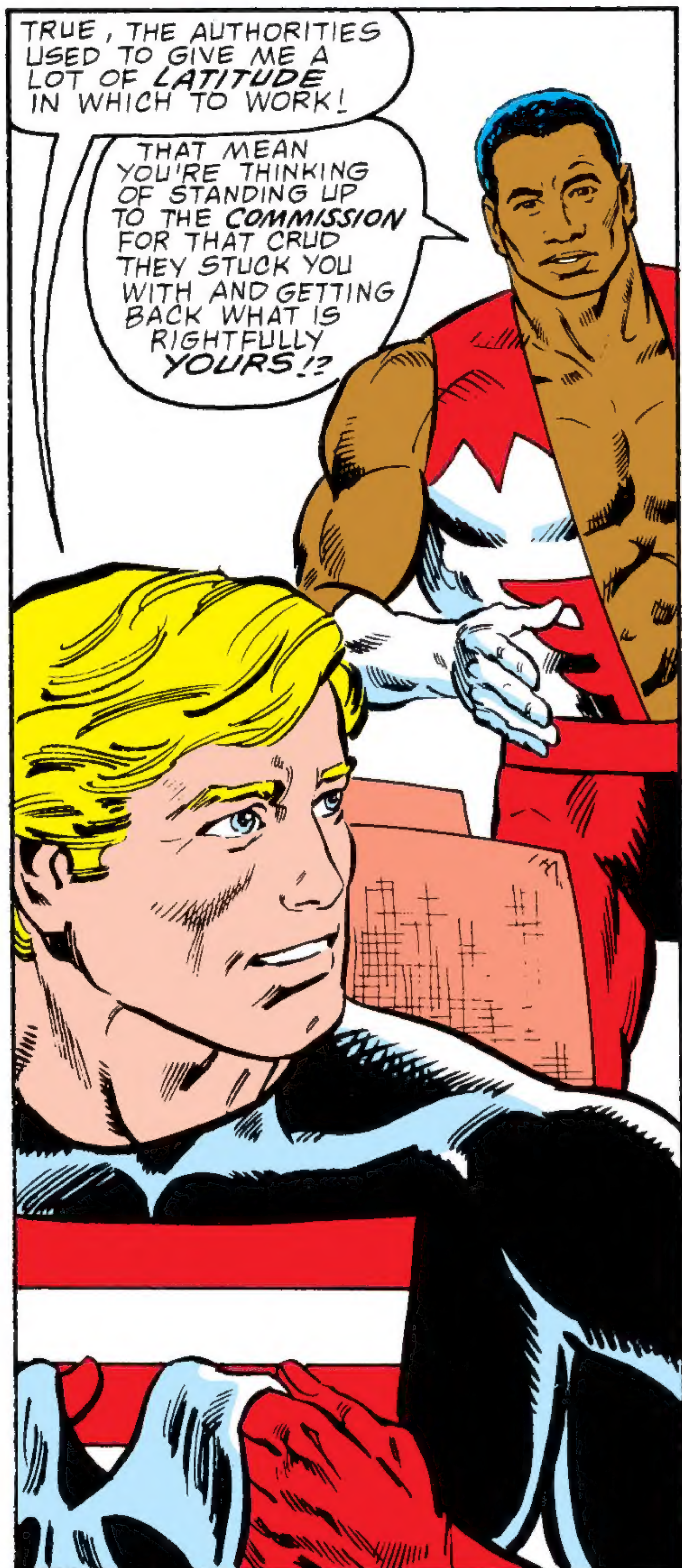




AND NOW THAT I'M STARTING ALL OVER, I REALIZE JUST HOW VALUABLE MY LEGEND... MY REPUTATION... WAS TO CARRYING OUT MY MISSION!

YEAH. IF YOU'D BEEN ABLE TO TELL THE LAS VEGAS POLICE WHO YOU REALLY WERE, THEY'D NEVER HAVE THROWN US IN THE SLAMMER FOR HELPING THEM NAIL THOSE SERPENT CROOKS!*

*LAST ISSUE.
--RALF.



TRUE, THE AUTHORITIES USED TO GIVE ME A LOT OF LATITUDE IN WHICH TO WORK!

THAT MEAN YOU'RE THINKING OF STANDING UP TO THE COMMISSION FOR THAT CRUD THEY STUCK YOU WITH AND GETTING BACK WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS!?



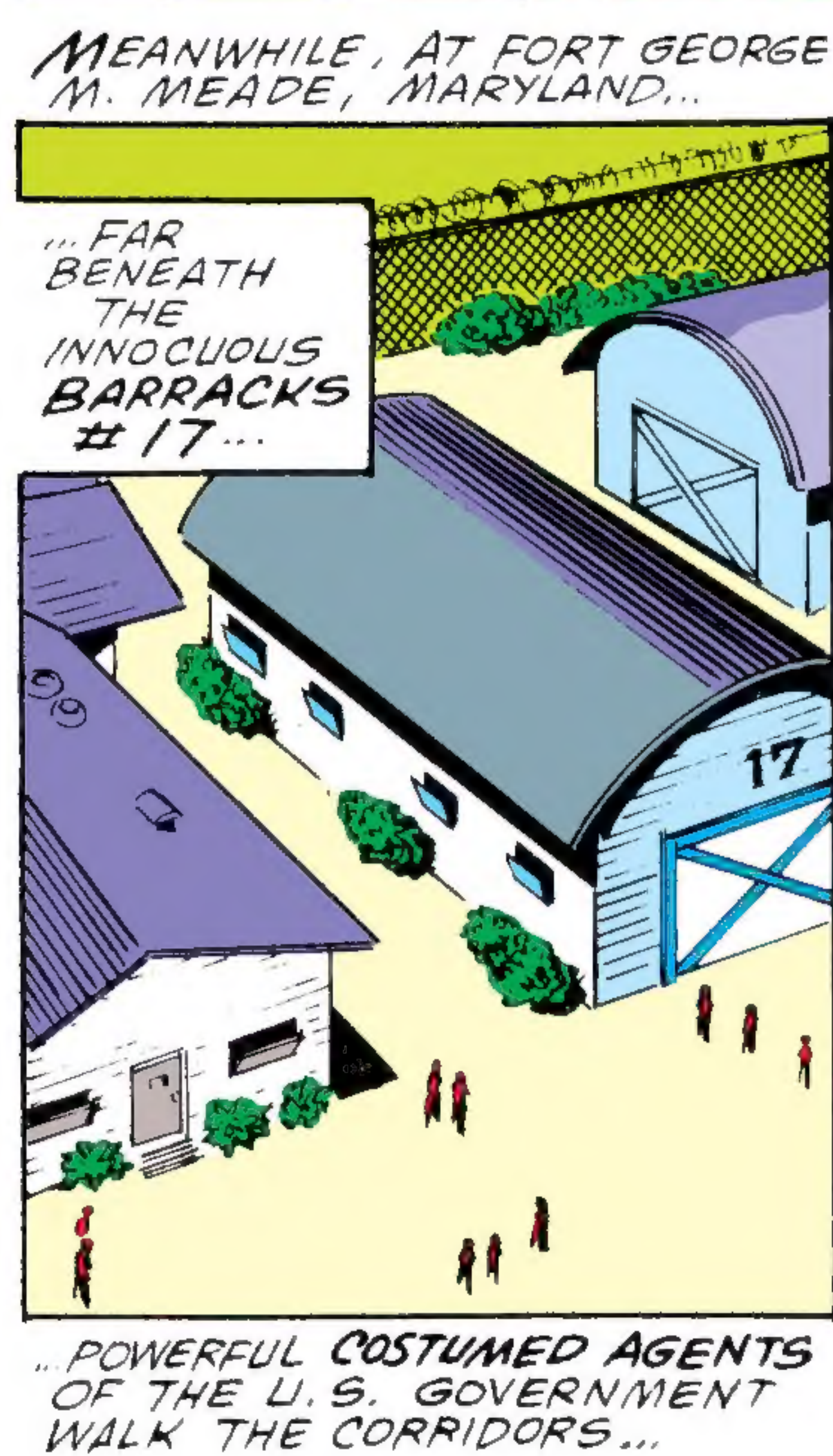
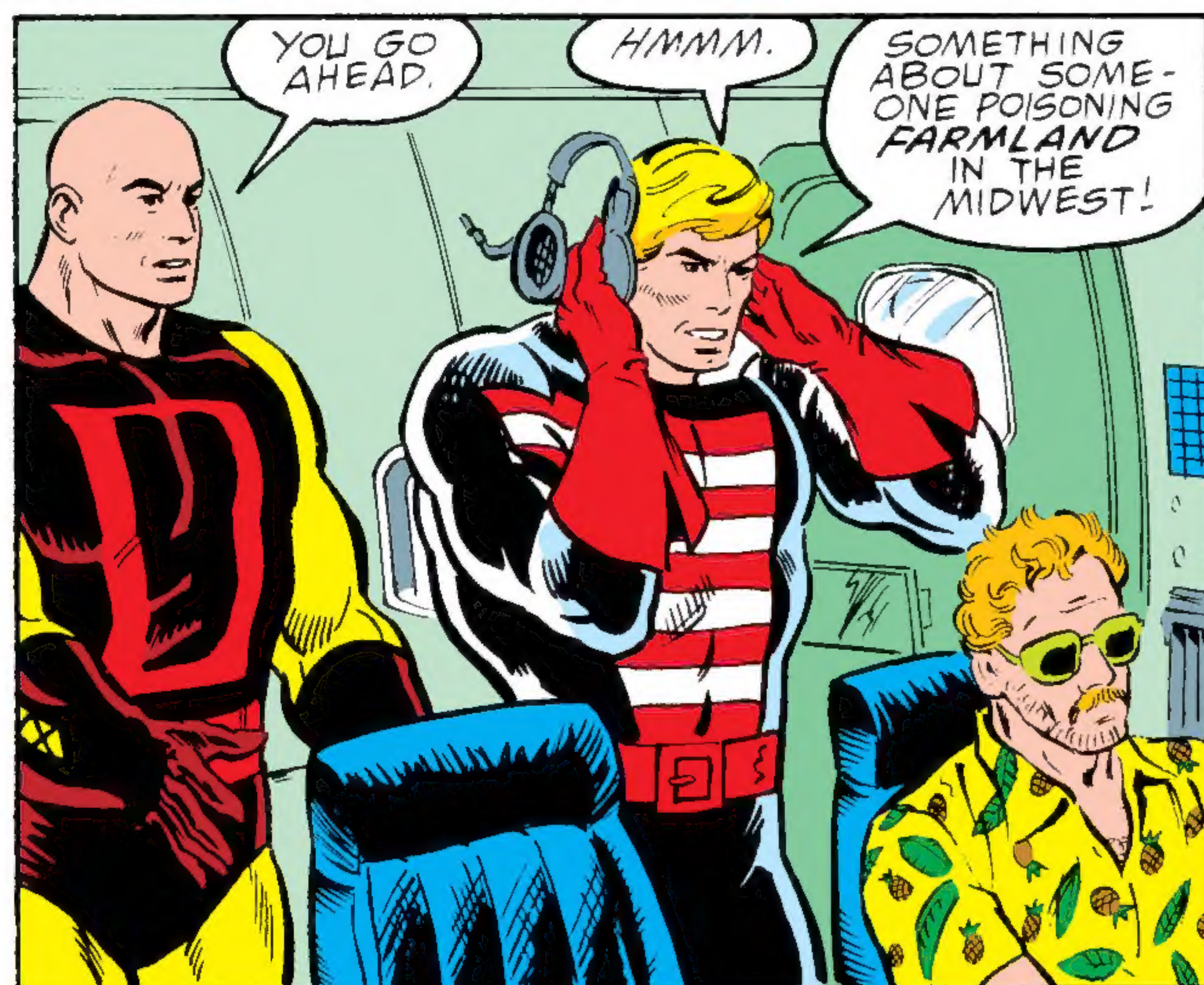
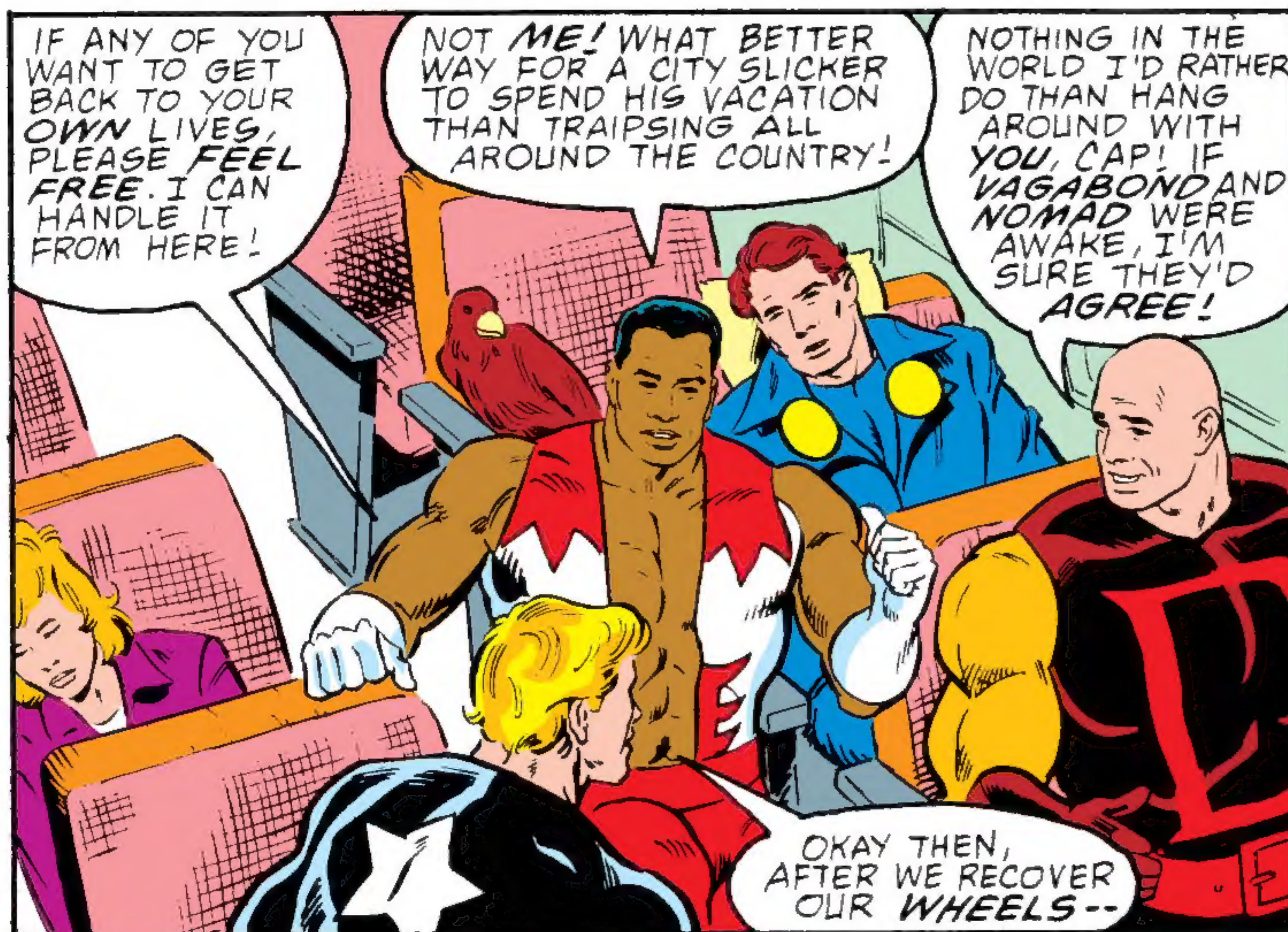
SORRY, SAM. THEY'VE MADE THEIR DECISION. LET THEM LIVE WITH IT. I KNOW I CAN!

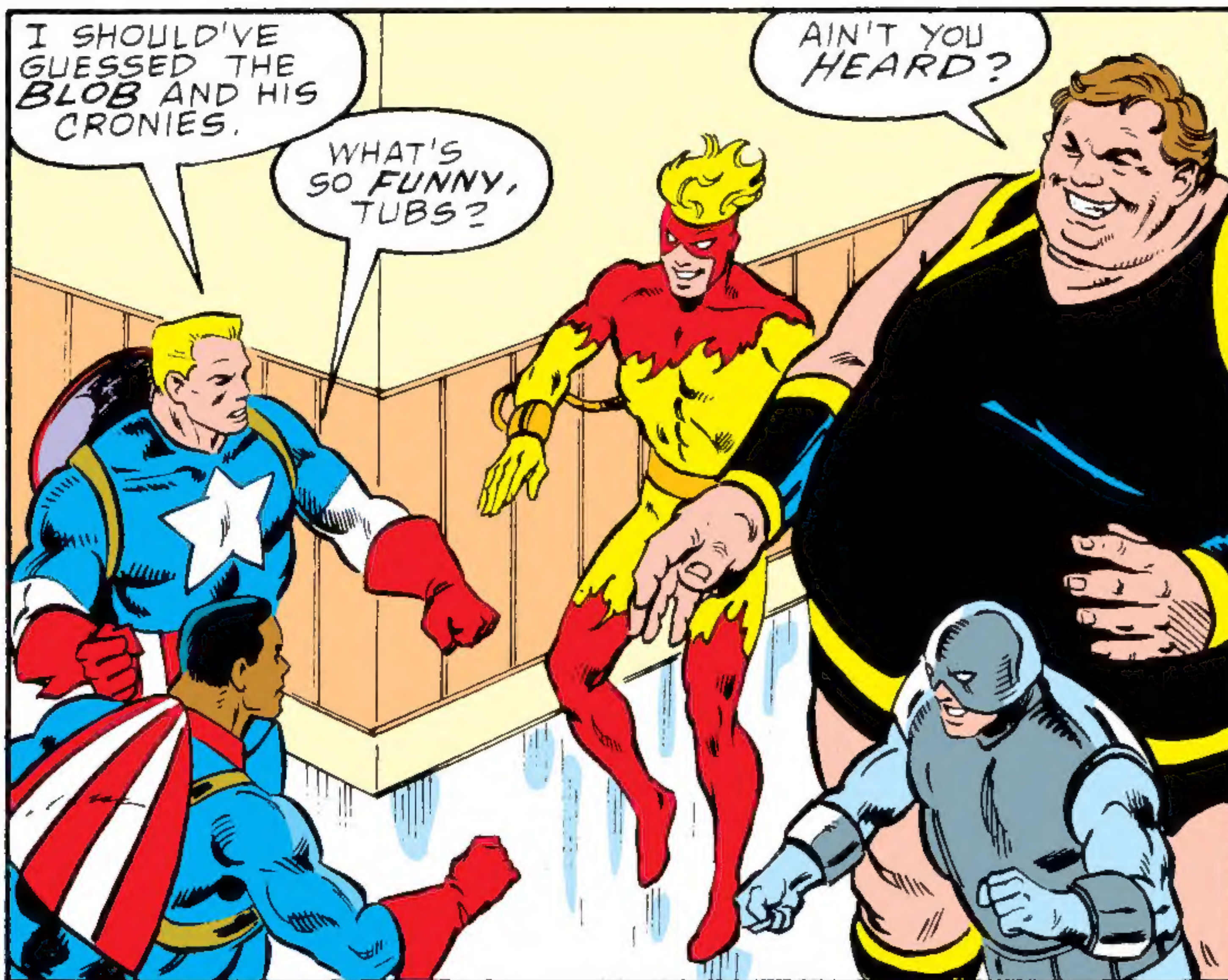
MAN ALIVE! HOW AM I EVER GONNA BE ABLE TO CONVINCE MY BUDDY HOW WRONG-HEADED HIS ATTITUDE IS?!

I'VE ONLY GOT A FEW MORE WEEKS... THEN THE HIGH-FLYING FALCON HAS TO HAUL HIS TAIL-FEATHERS BACK TO HIS HOME TURF!

I TAKE IT YOU WANT TO FOLLOW UP ON THESE SERPENT GUYS!

UH-HUH. THEIR ILK HAS MANAGED TO ELUDE ME TOO MANY TIMES NOW! IT'S TIME FOR A RECKONING!

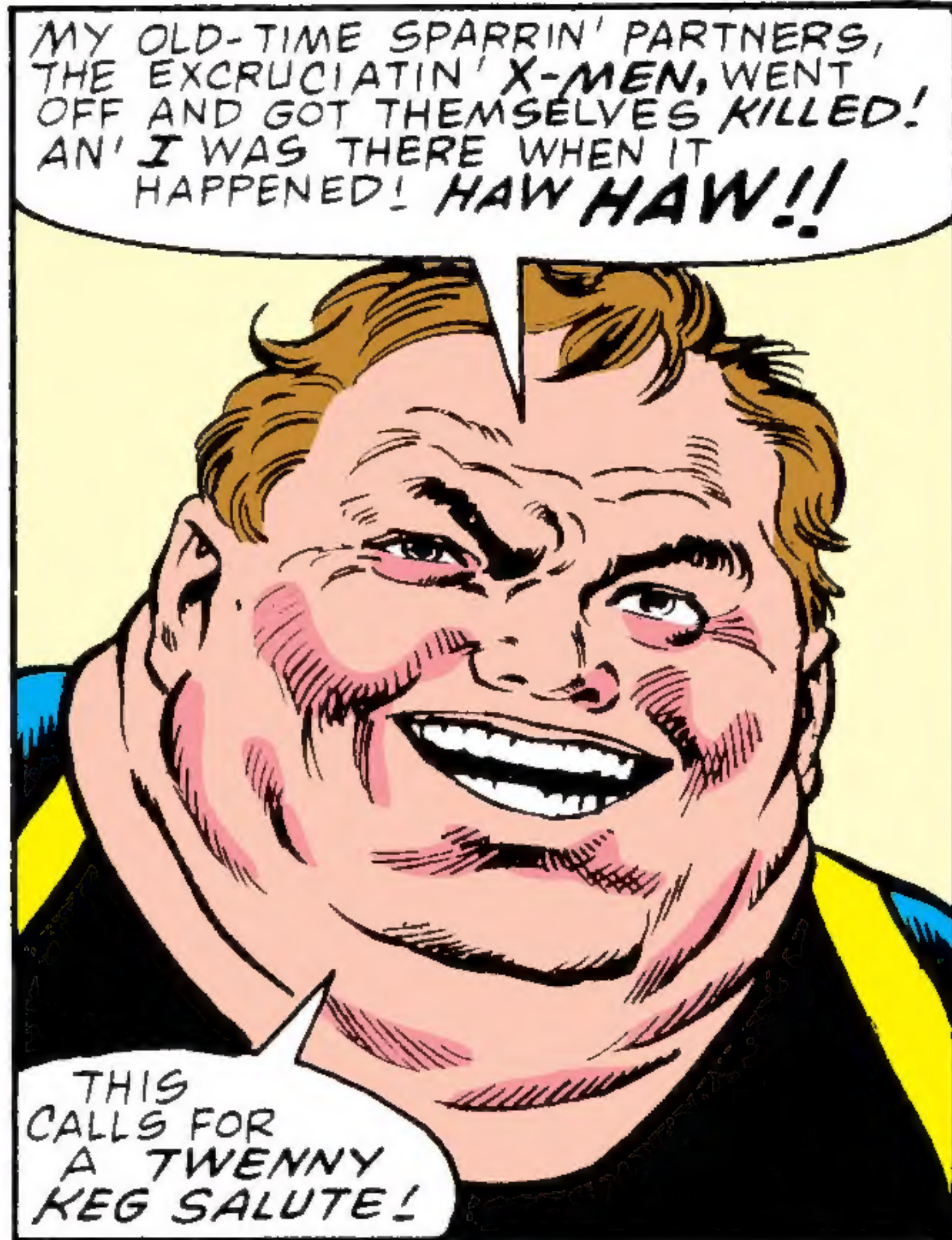




I SHOULD'VE GUESSED THE **BLOB** AND HIS CRONIES.

WHAT'S SO **FUNNY**, TUBS?

AIN'T YOU **HEARD**?



MY OLD-TIME SPARRIN' PARTNERS, THE EXCRUCIATIN' **X-MEN**, WENT OFF AND GOT THEMSELVES **KILLED**! AN' I WAS THERE WHEN IT HAPPENED! **HAW HAW!!**

THIS CALLS FOR A **TWENNY KEG** SALUTE!



WHY SO **GLUM**, PAL? THE **X-MEN** WERE **BADDIES**, WEREN'T THEY?

ANYBODY THE **FREEDOM FORCE** HATES MUST'VE HAD SOMETHING GOING FOR THEM!

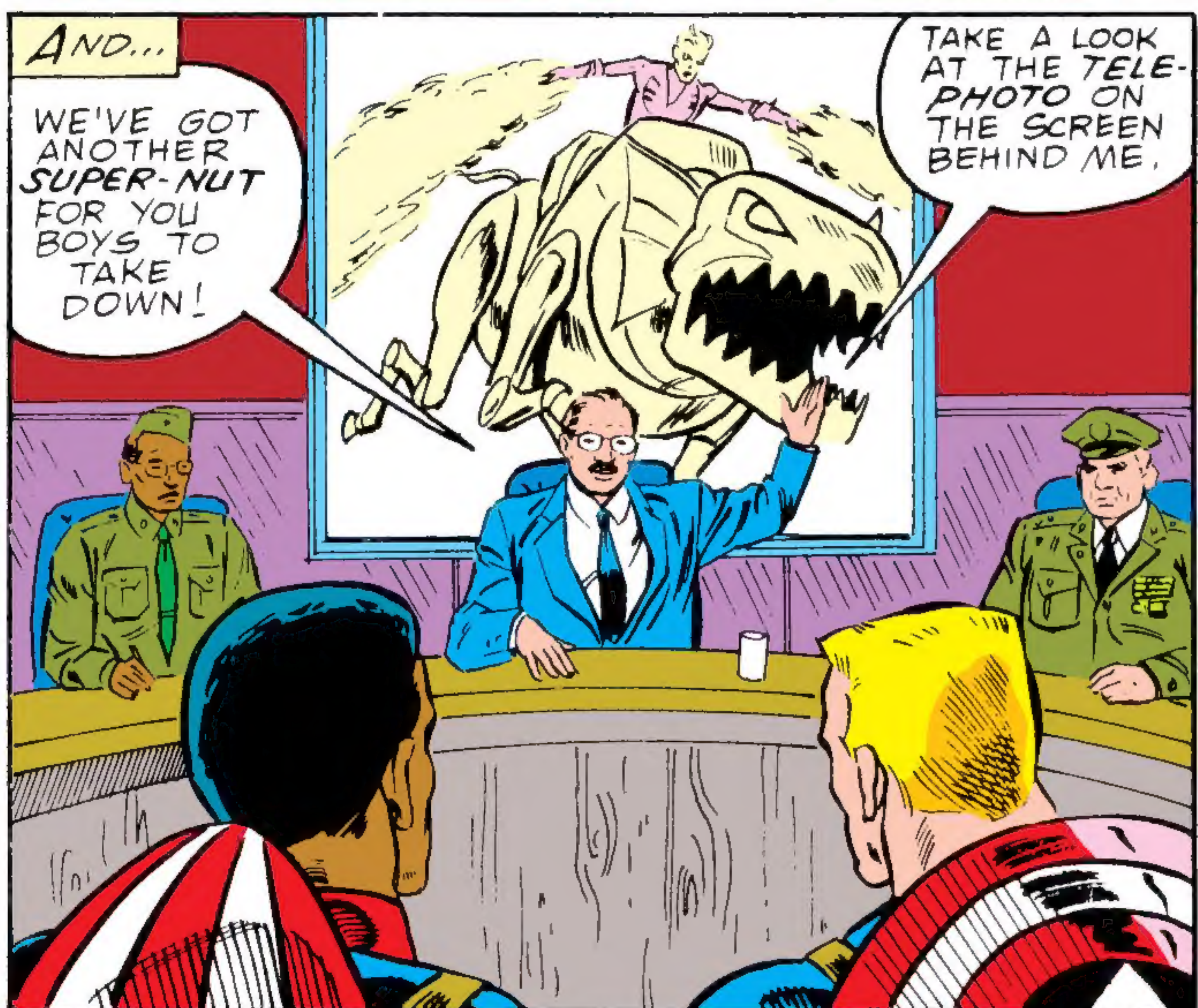


BESIDES, AFTER WHAT HAPPENED WITH **POWER**, I'M NOT FOND OF ANYBODY GETTING--

ATTENTION!!

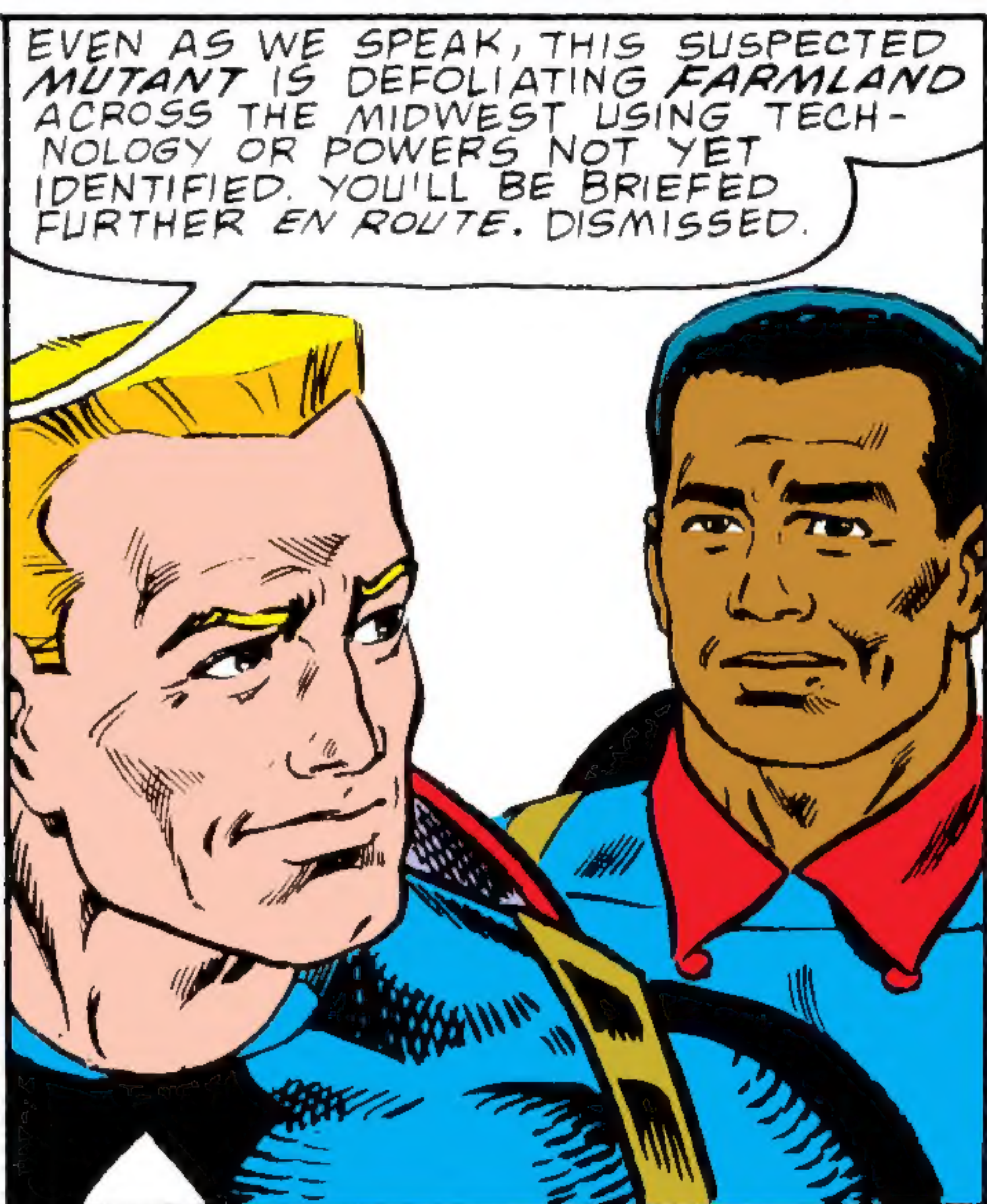
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND BUCKY PLEASE REPORT TO BRIEFING AT ONCE!

THERE GOES OUR **R&R**!



AND... WE'VE GOT ANOTHER **SUPER-NUT** FOR YOU BOYS TO TAKE DOWN!

TAKE A LOOK AT THE **TELEPHOTO** ON THE SCREEN BEHIND ME.



EVEN AS WE SPEAK, THIS SUSPECTED **MUTANT** IS DEFOLIATING FARMLAND ACROSS THE MIDWEST USING **TECHNOLOGY** OR **POWERS** NOT YET IDENTIFIED. YOU'LL BE BRIEFED FURTHER **EN ROUTE**. DISMISSED.

HOURS PASS AS THE SKELETAL HORSEWOMAN FAMINE TIRELESSLY RAVAGES THE LAND...

SHE HAS RIDDEN ALONE.

NO ONE HAS PURSUED OR TRIED TO STOP HER--

--UNTIL NOW.

TARGET SIGHTED, REDFOX ONE. MATCH SPEEDS. OVER.

WE COPY, REDFOX TWO.

RELEASE HEAT-SEEKERS!

BOOM

BOOM

SHE LAUGHS AT THE ATTACK--

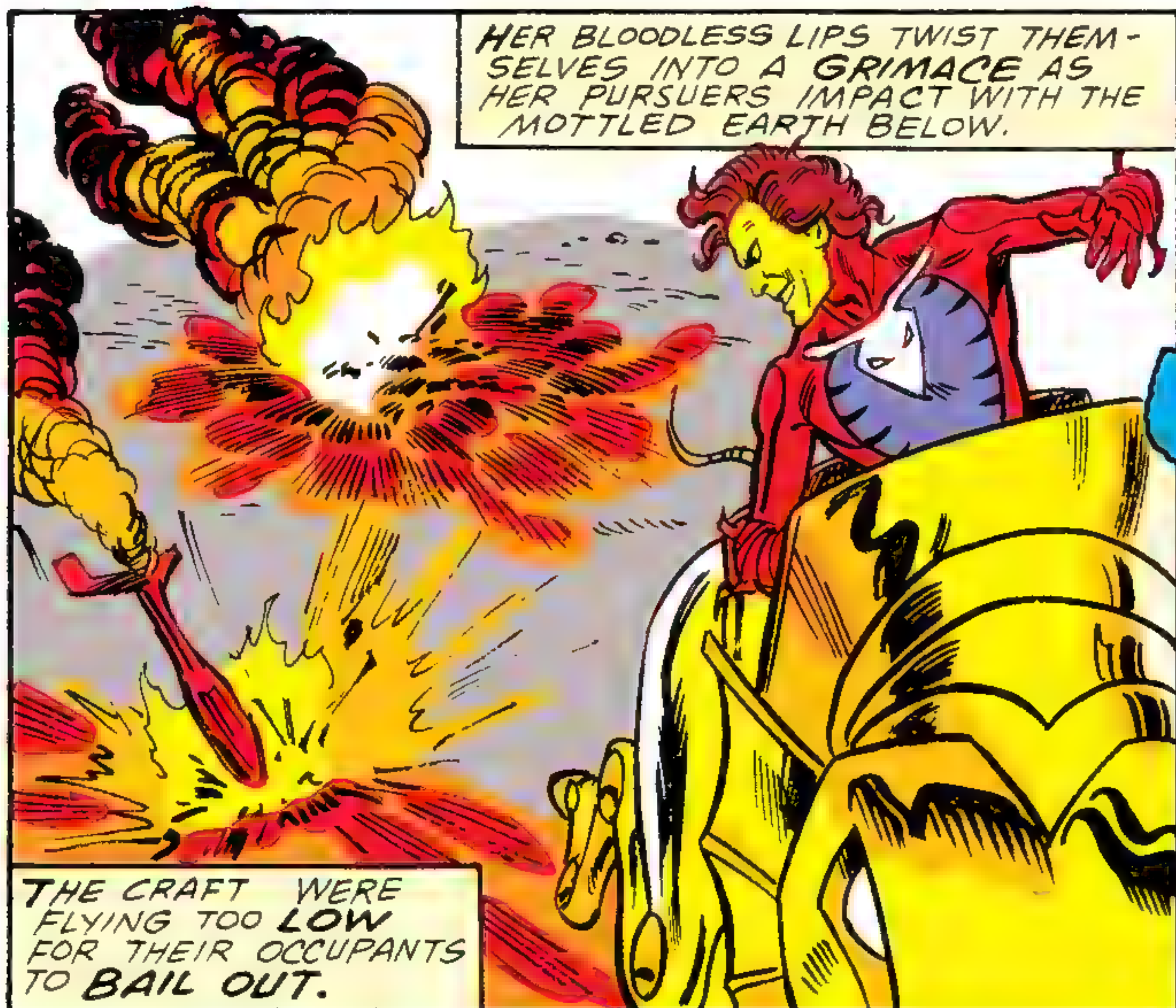
--AND ELUDES IT WITH DEMONIC EASE.

CRIMP

MWMM

CRIMP

MAYDAY! MAYDAY! WE'VE BEEN HIT! CAN'T SEE WHAT--



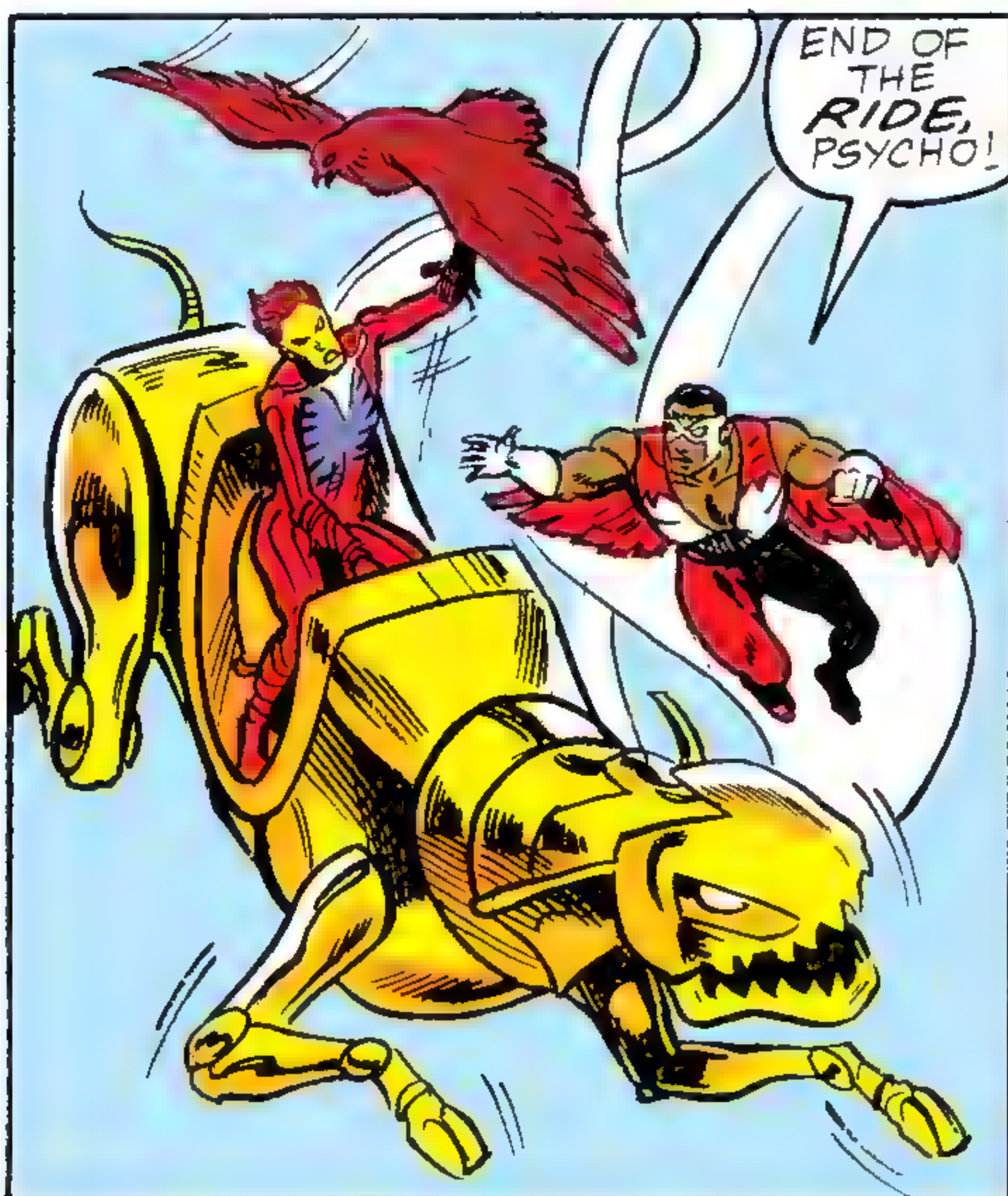
HER BLOODLESS LIPS TWIST THEMSELVES INTO A GRIMACE AS HER PURSUERS IMPACT WITH THE MOTTLED EARTH BELOW.

THE CRAFT WERE FLYING TOO LOW FOR THEIR OCCUPANTS TO BAIL OUT.

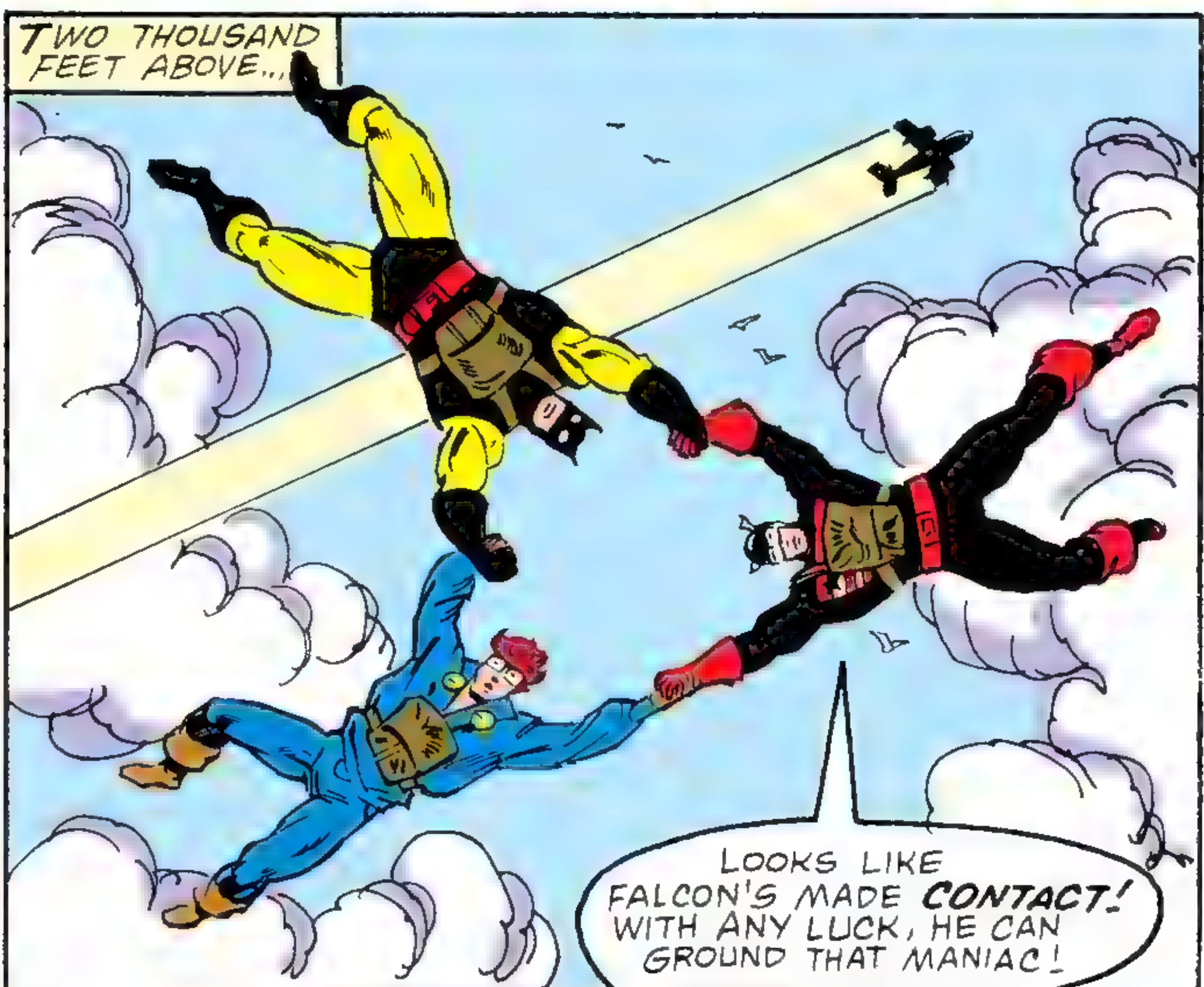


BUT THEN--

SQUAWK

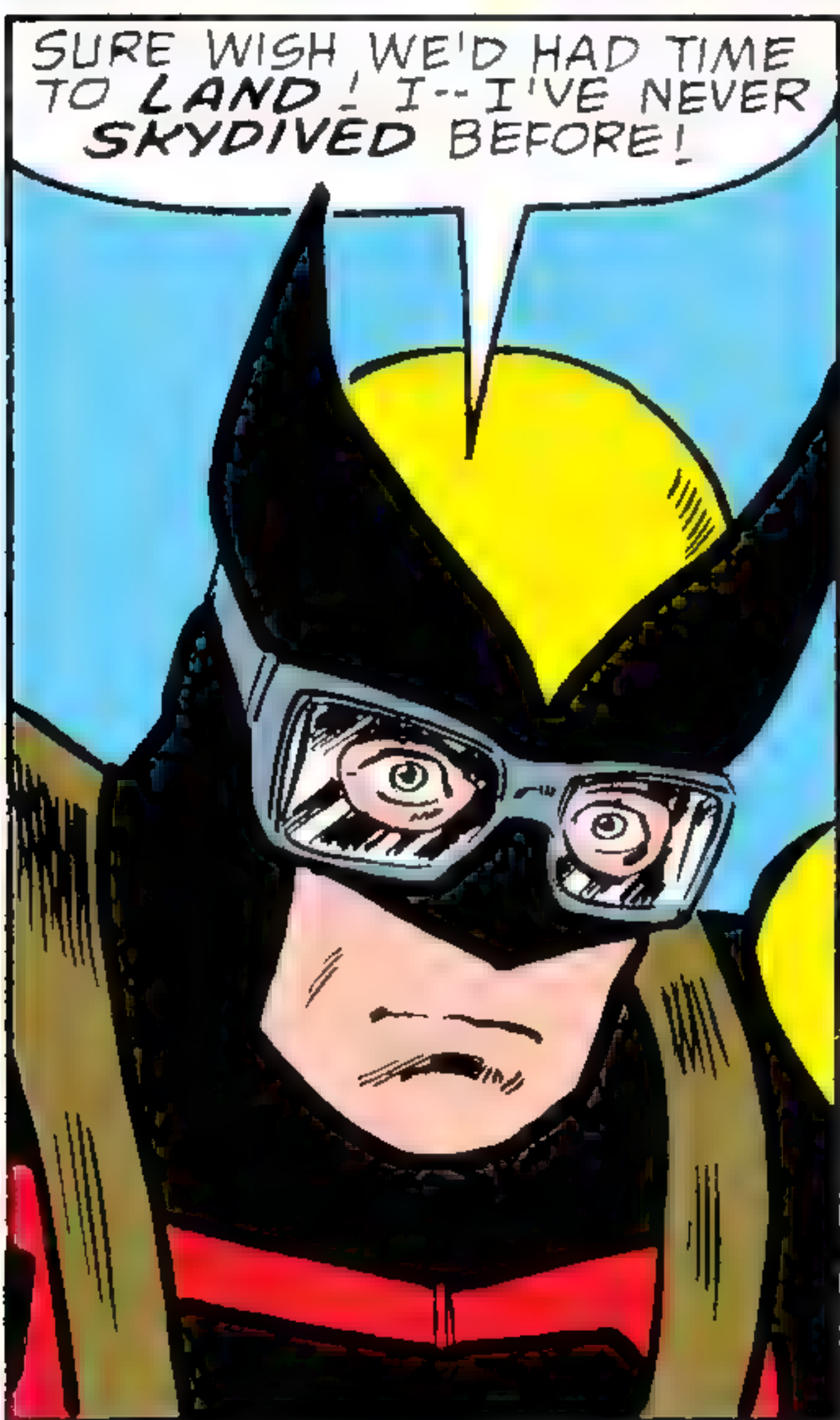


END OF THE RIDE, PSYCHO!

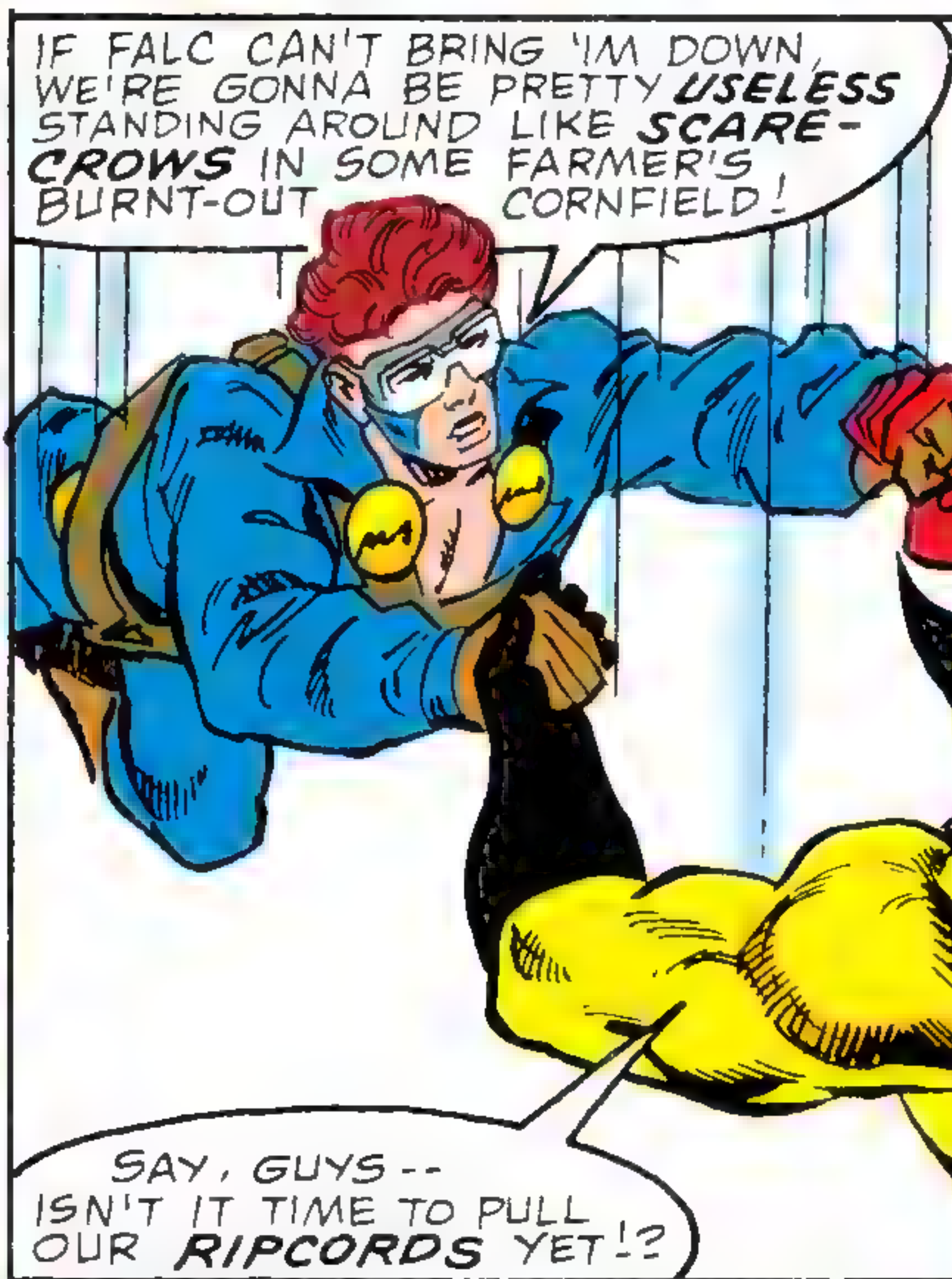


TWO THOUSAND FEET ABOVE...

LOOKS LIKE FALCON'S MADE CONTACT! WITH ANY LUCK, HE CAN GROUND THAT MANIAC!

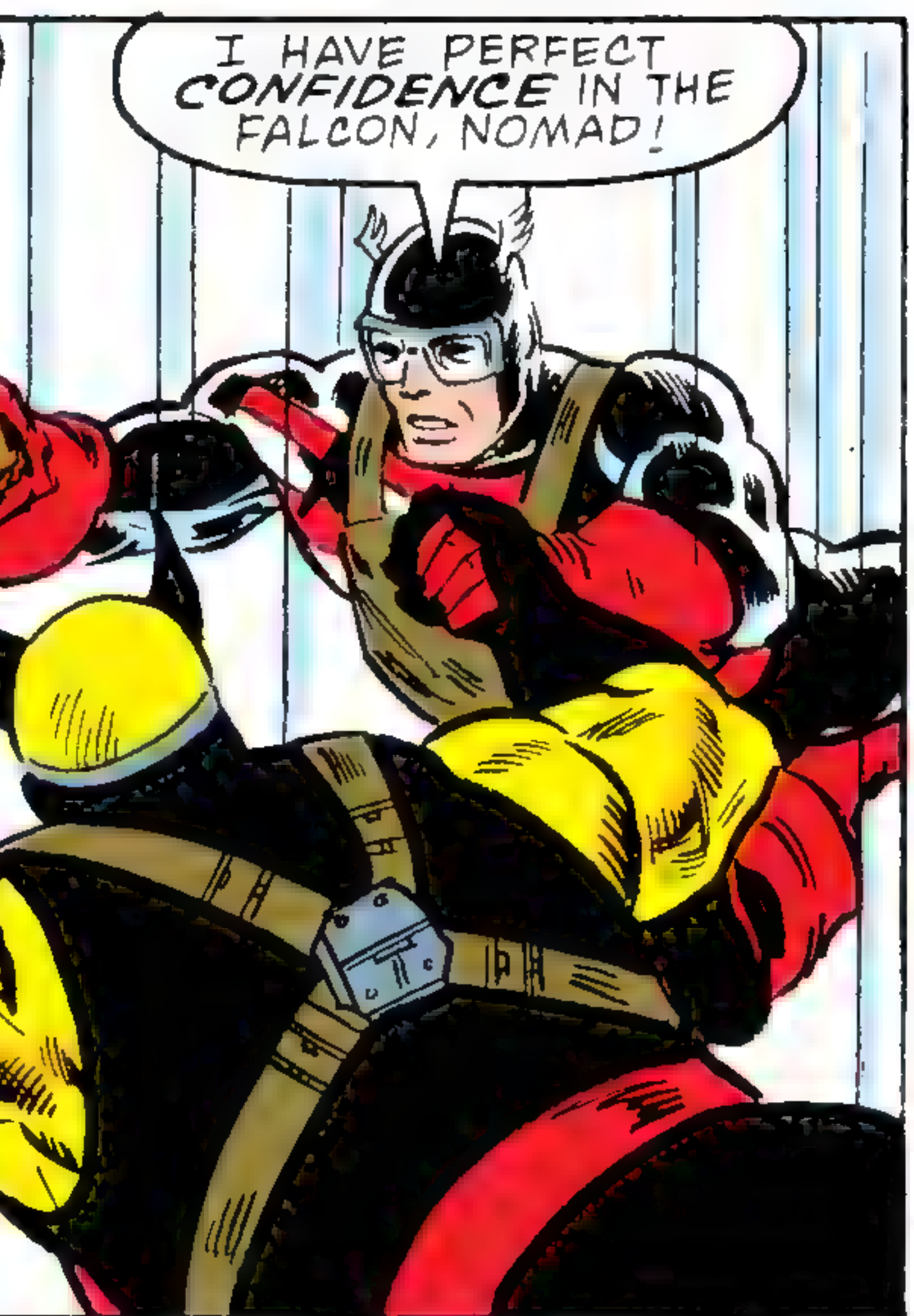


SURE WISH WE'D HAD TIME TO LAND! I--I'VE NEVER SKYDIVED BEFORE!

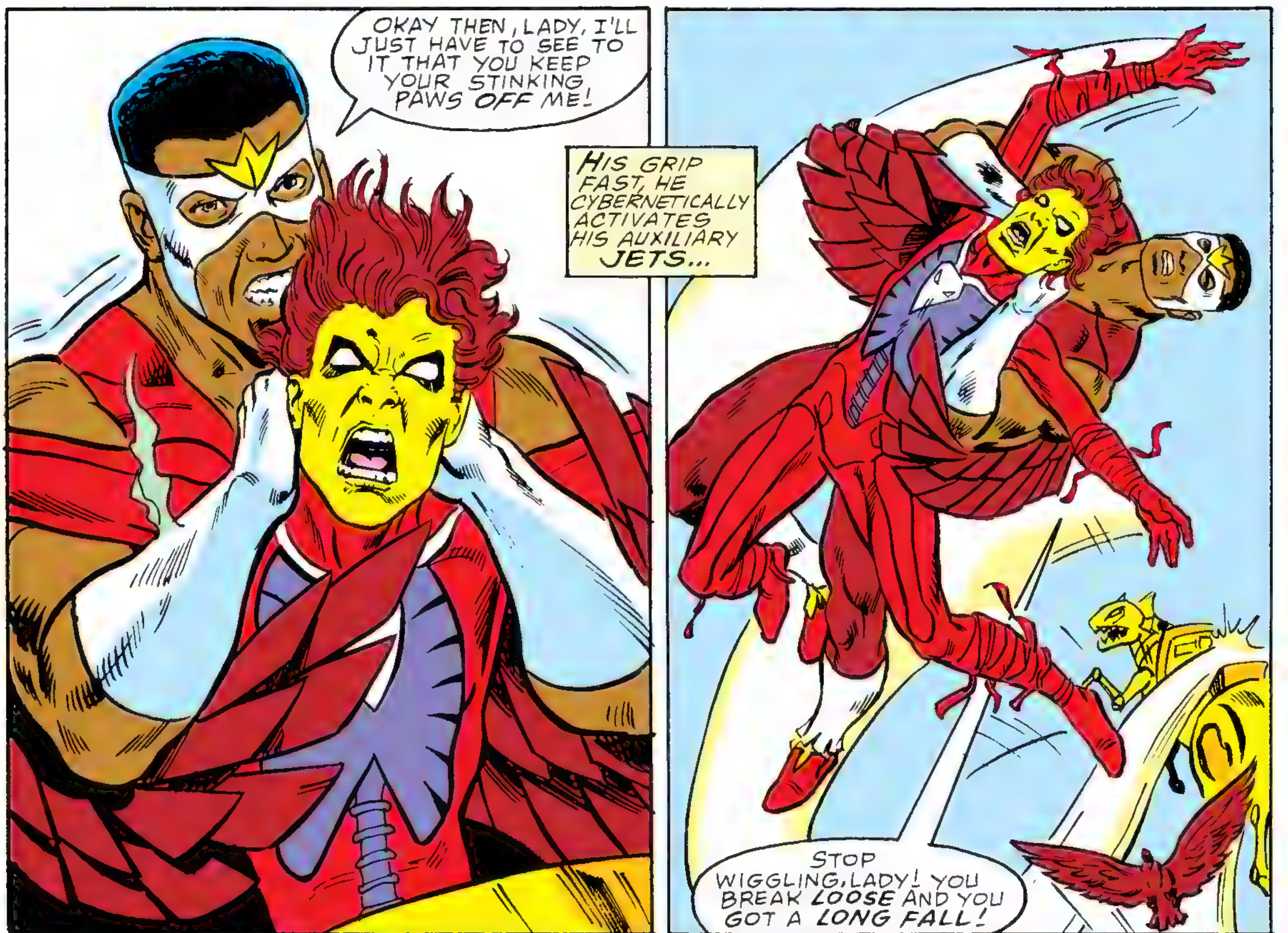
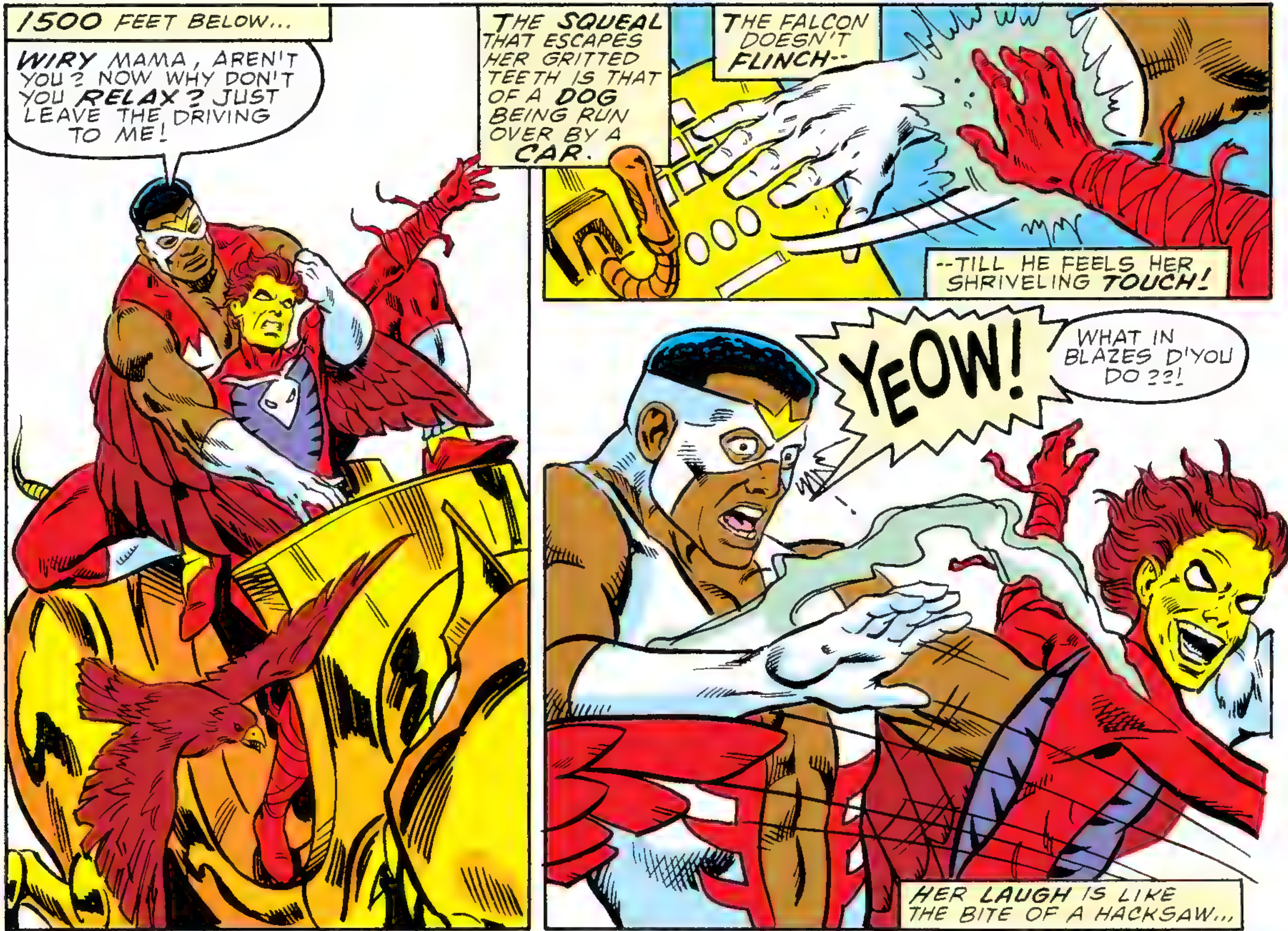


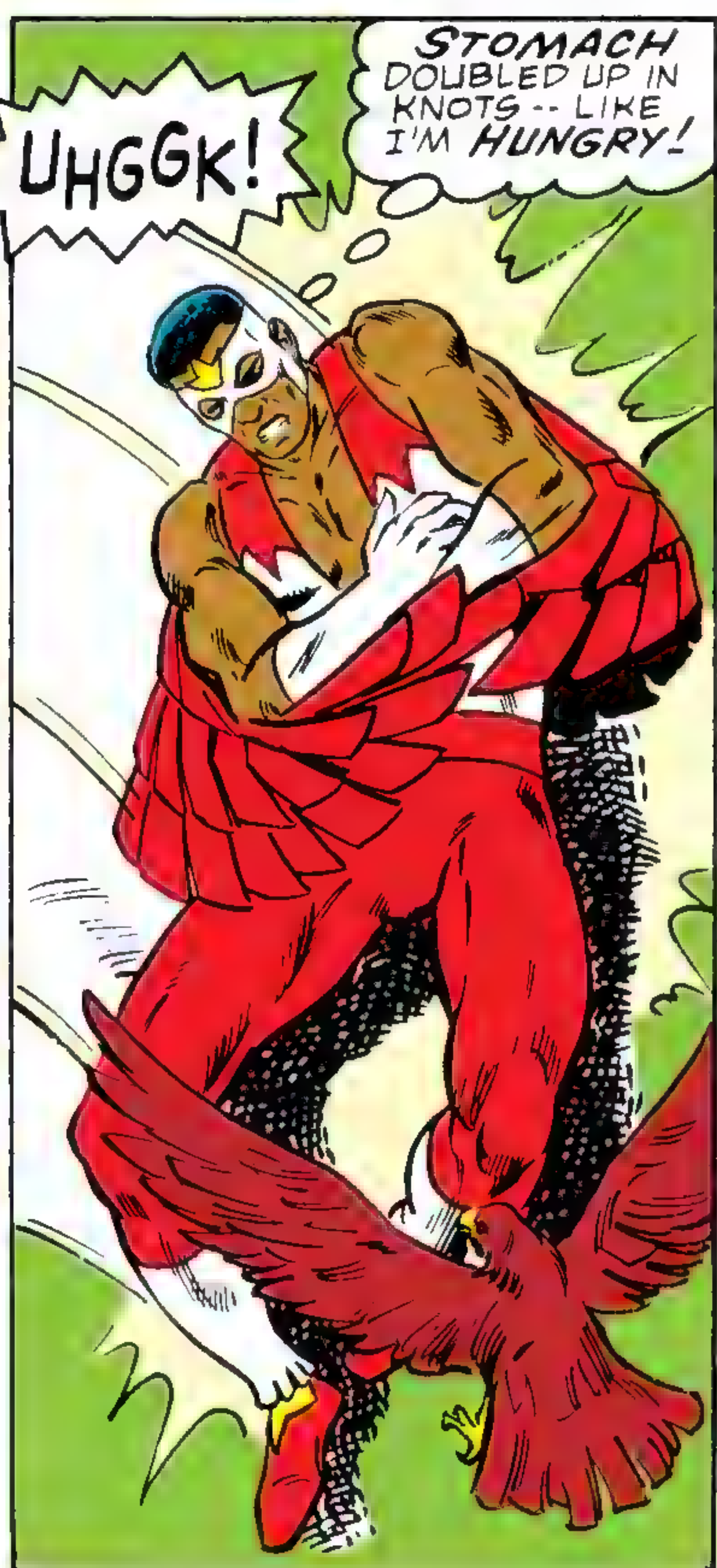
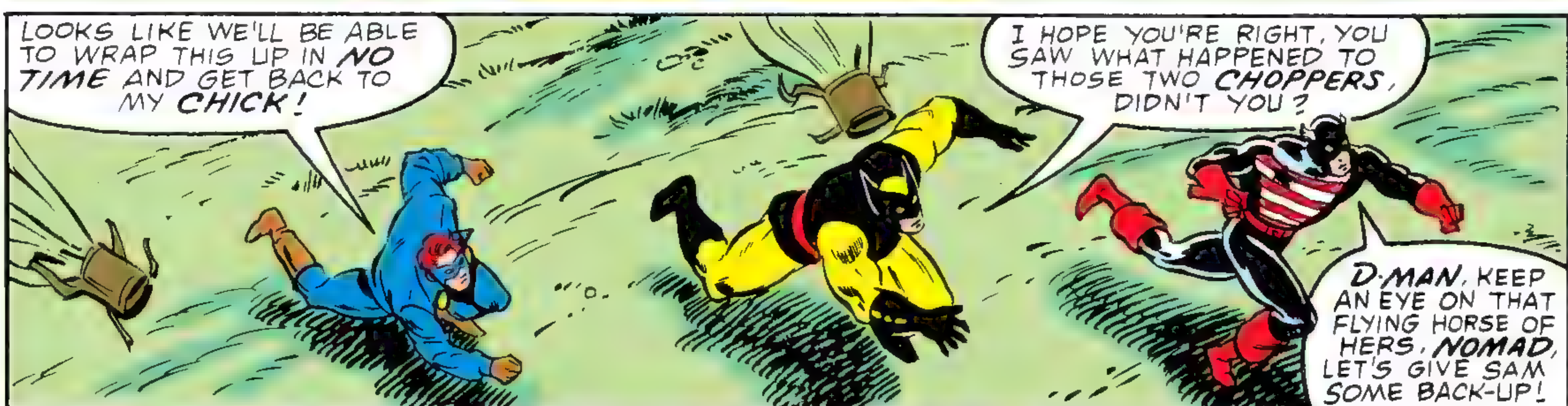
IF FALC CAN'T BRING 'IM DOWN, WE'RE GONNA BE PRETTY USELESS STANDING AROUND LIKE SCARECROWS IN SOME FARMER'S BURNT-OUT CORNFIELD!

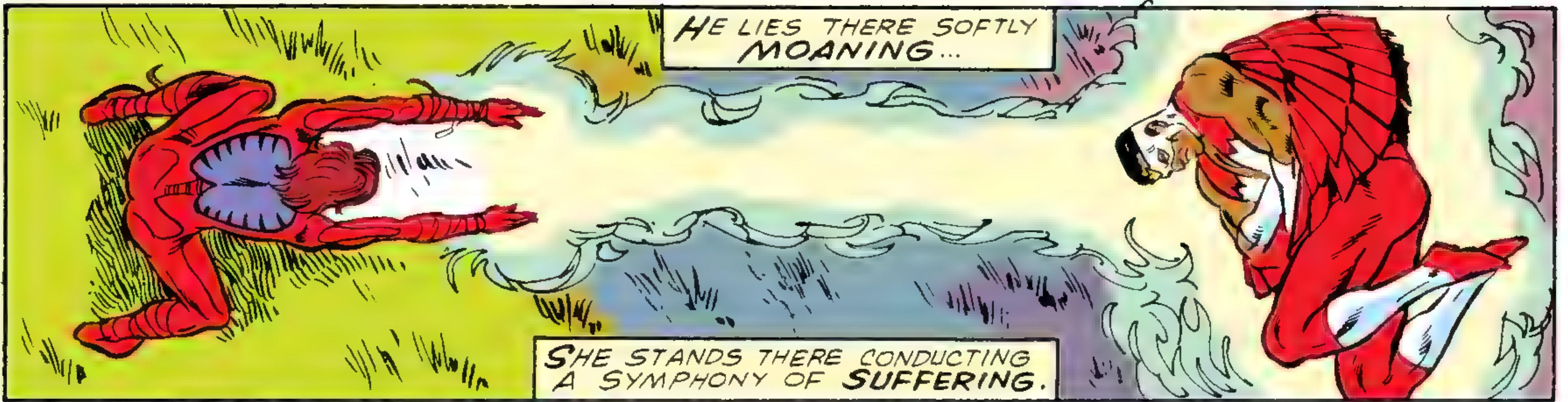
SAY, GUYS-- ISN'T IT TIME TO PULL OUR RIPCORDS YET!?



I HAVE PERFECT CONFIDENCE IN THE FALCON, NOMAD!

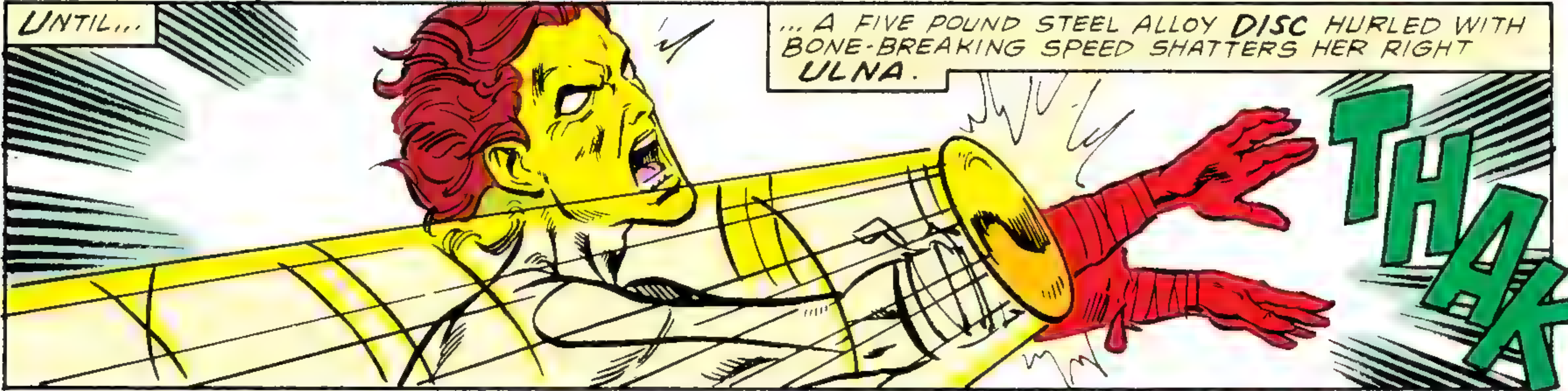






HE LIES THERE SOFTLY
MOANING...

SHE STANDS THERE CONDUCTING
A SYMPHONY OF SUFFERING.



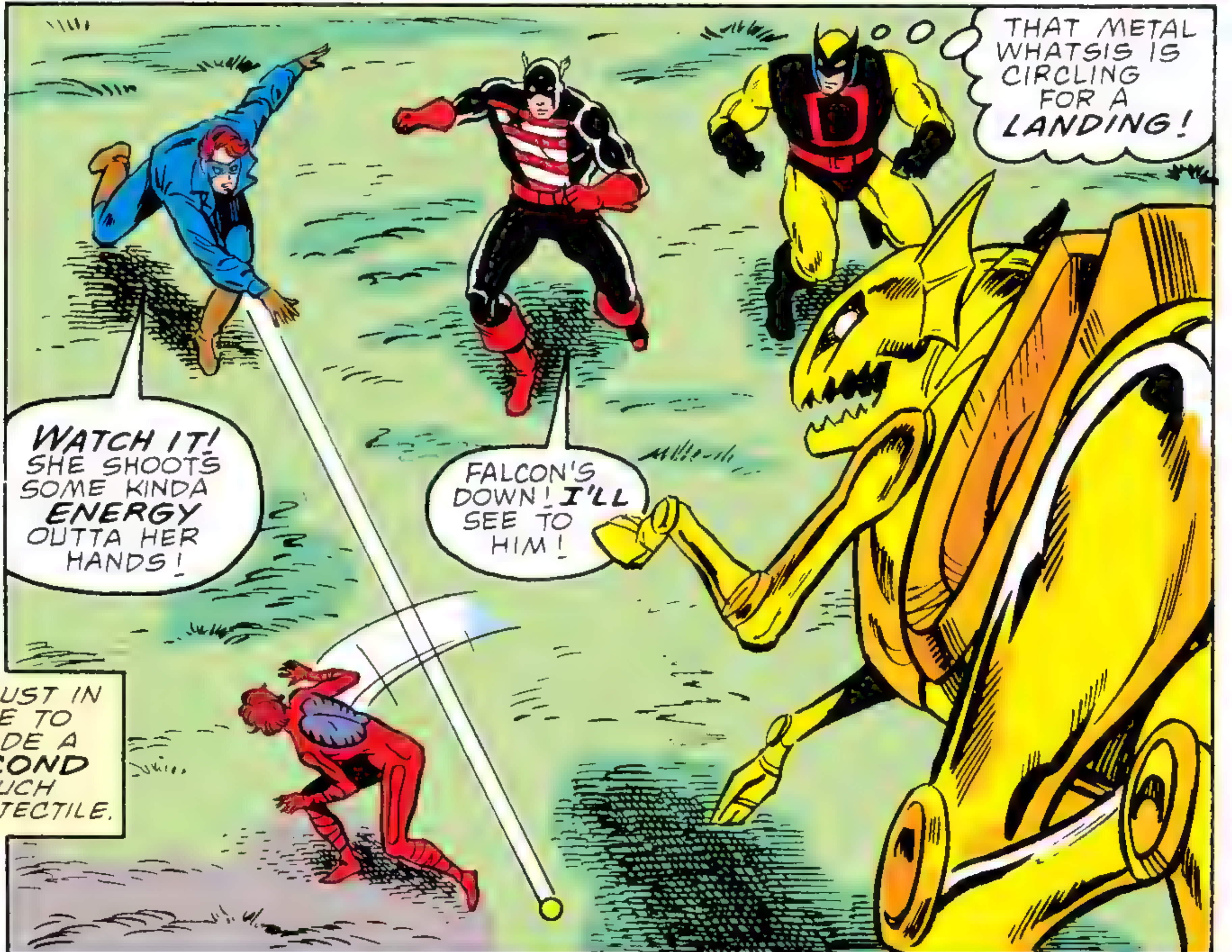
UNTIL...

... A FIVE POUND STEEL ALLOY DISC HURLED WITH
BONE-BREAKING SPEED SHATTERS HER RIGHT
ULNA.

THAK



SHE GULPS DOWN A
YELP OF PAIN AND
PIVOTS...

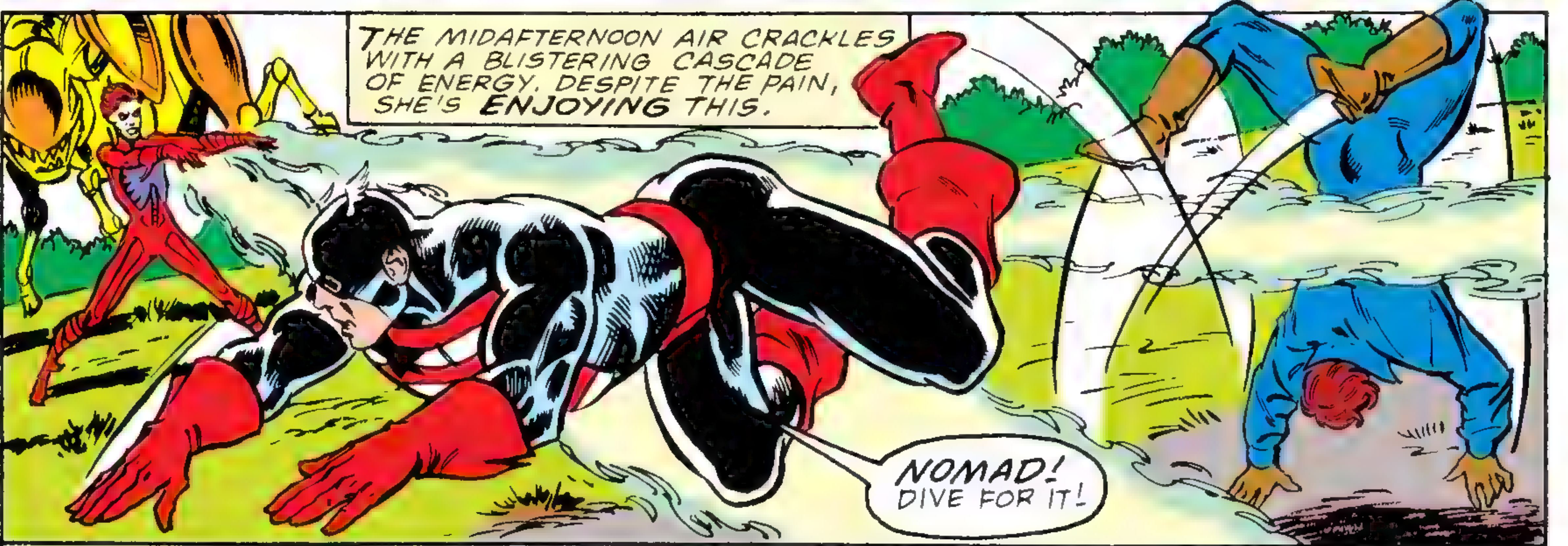


THAT METAL
WHATSIS IS
CIRCLING
FOR A
LANDING!

WATCH IT!
SHE SHOOTS
SOME KINDA
ENERGY
OUTTA HER
HANDS!

FALCON'S
DOWN! I'LL
SEE TO
HIM!

...JUST IN
TIME TO
EVADE A
SECOND
SUCH
PROJECTILE.



THE MIDAFTERNOON AIR CRACKLES
WITH A BLISTERING CASCADE
OF ENERGY. DESPITE THE PAIN,
SHE'S ENJOYING THIS.

NOMAD!
DIVE FOR IT!

SORRY, PUNKER--THE ONLY PLACE THIS REFUGEE FROM A CAROUSEL IS GOING--

-- IS A JUNKYARD!

THE LARGEST OF HER ATTACKERS MANAGES A TWENTY-FOOT LEAP, DISLODGING HER FROM HER HOVERING METAL HORSE!

NOW THE METAL HORSE SEEKS TO RETURN THE FAVOR!

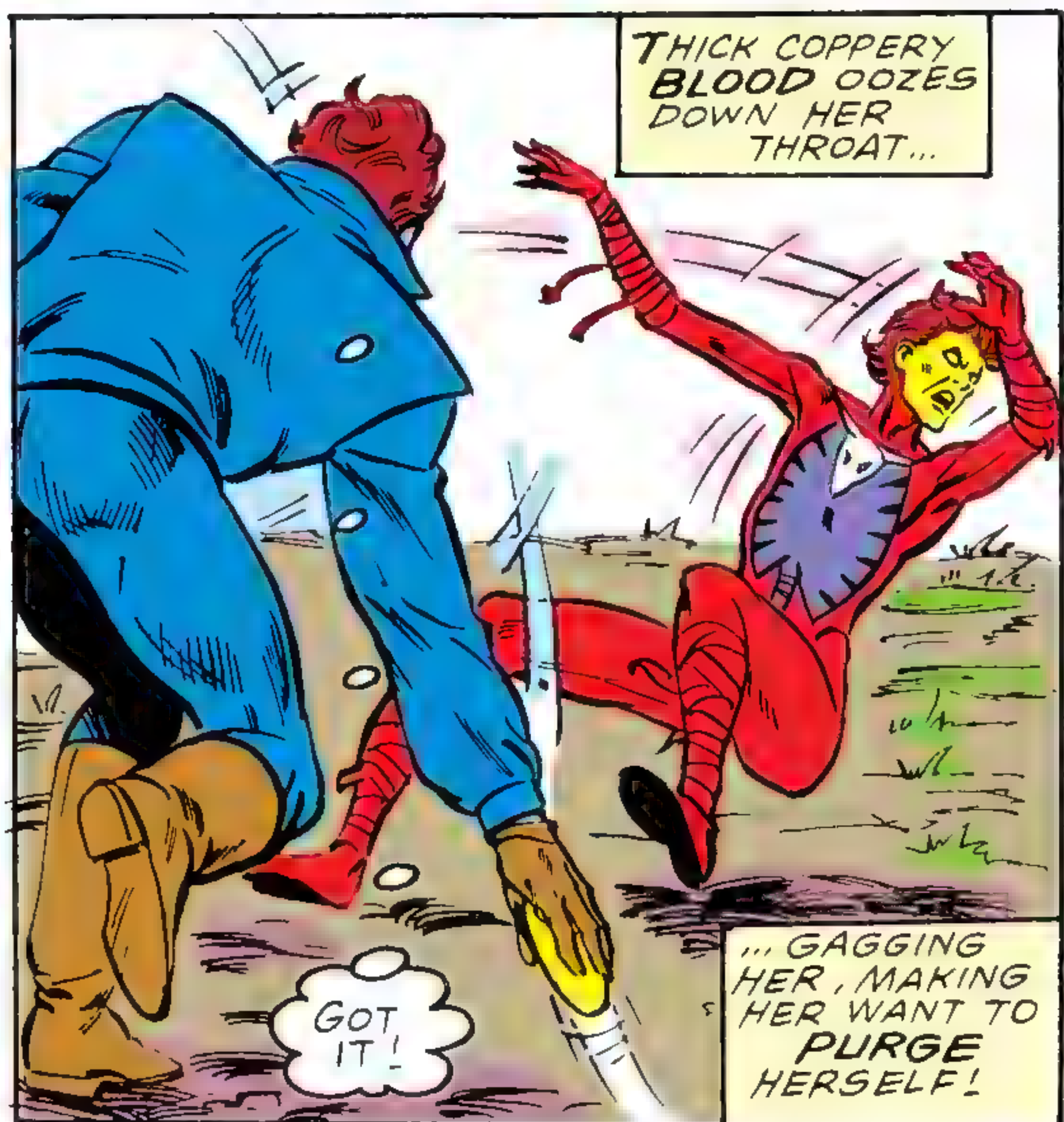
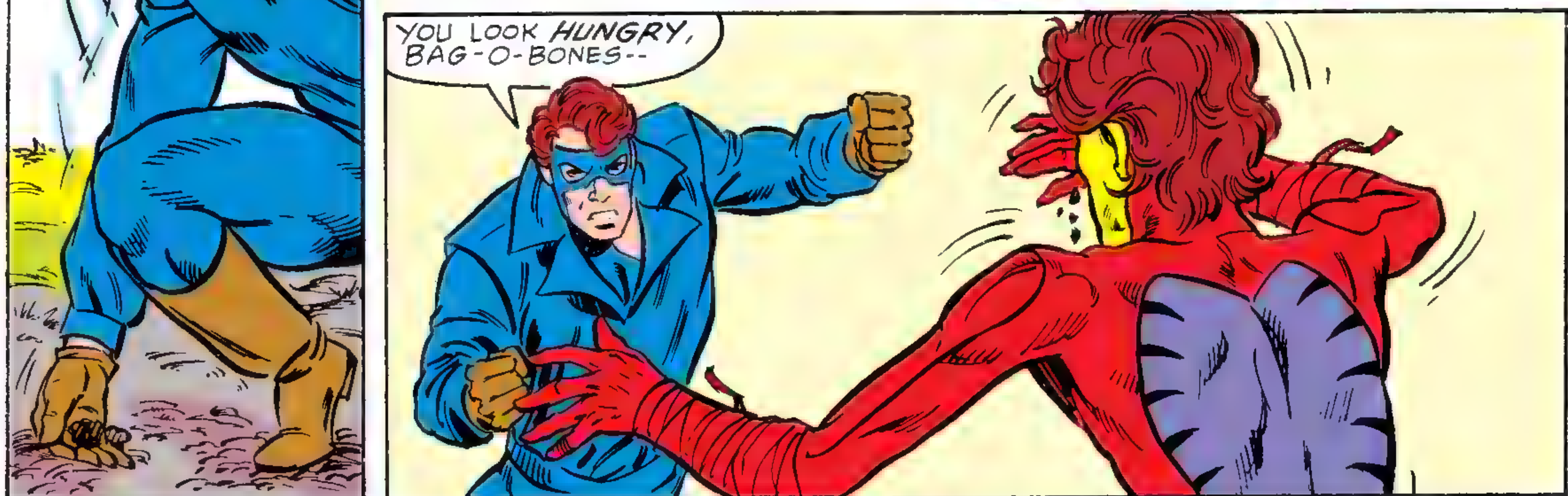
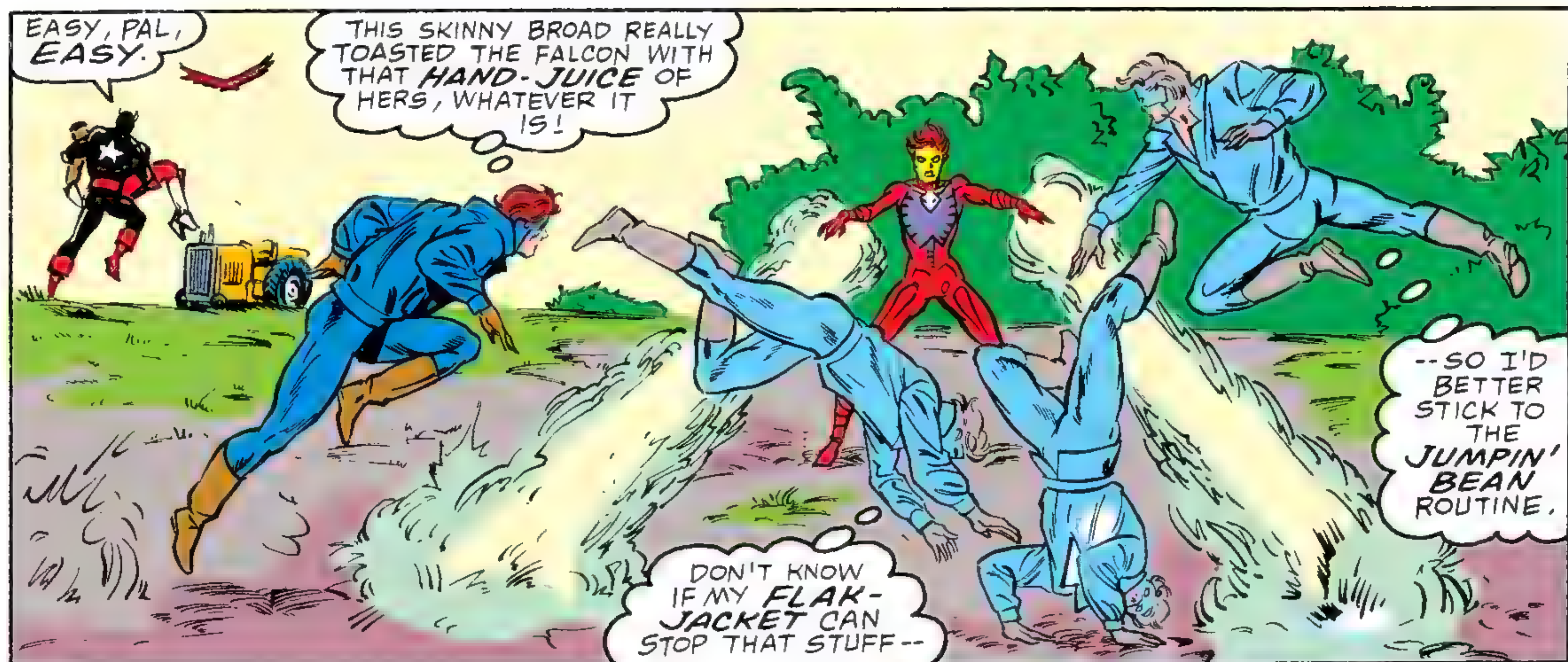
WHOA-OAH-OAHH!

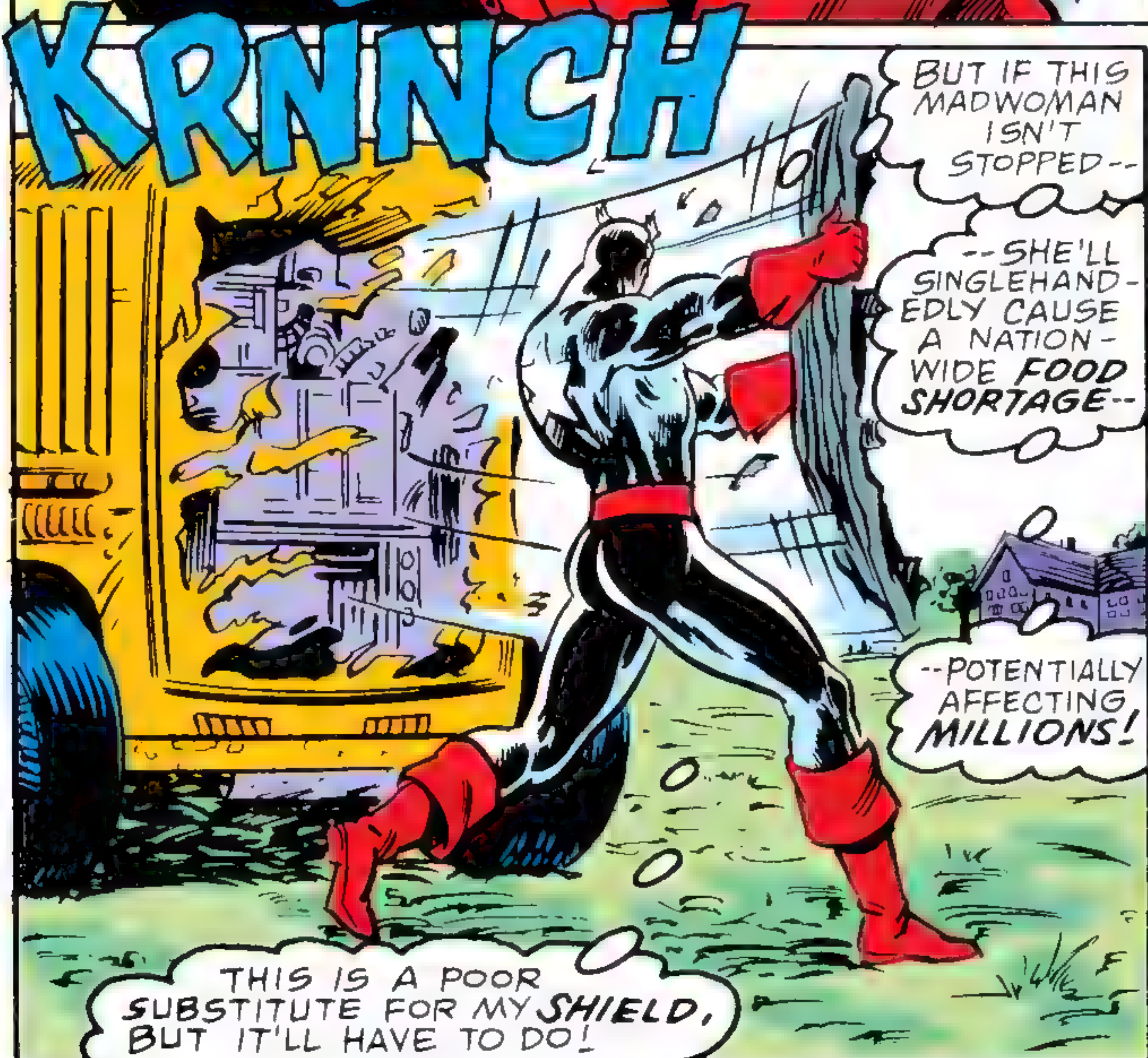
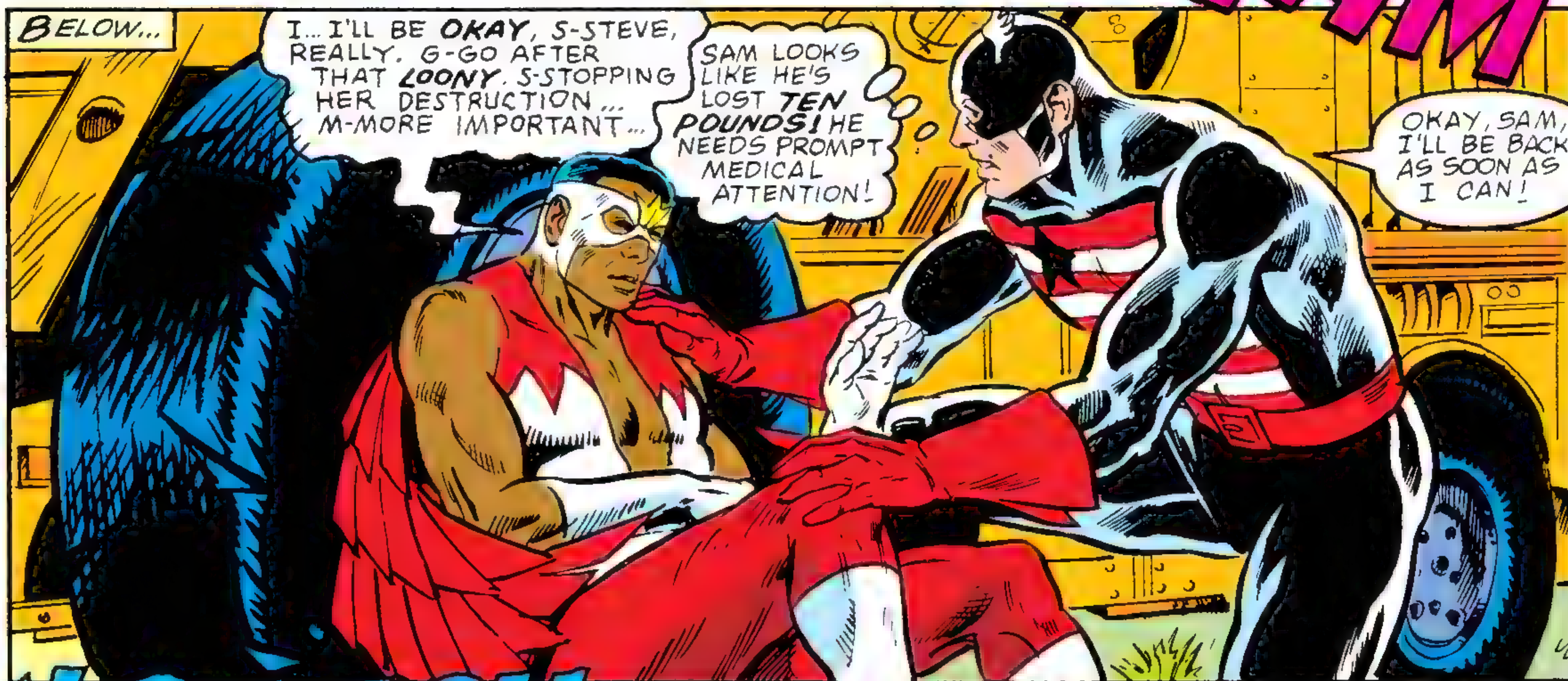
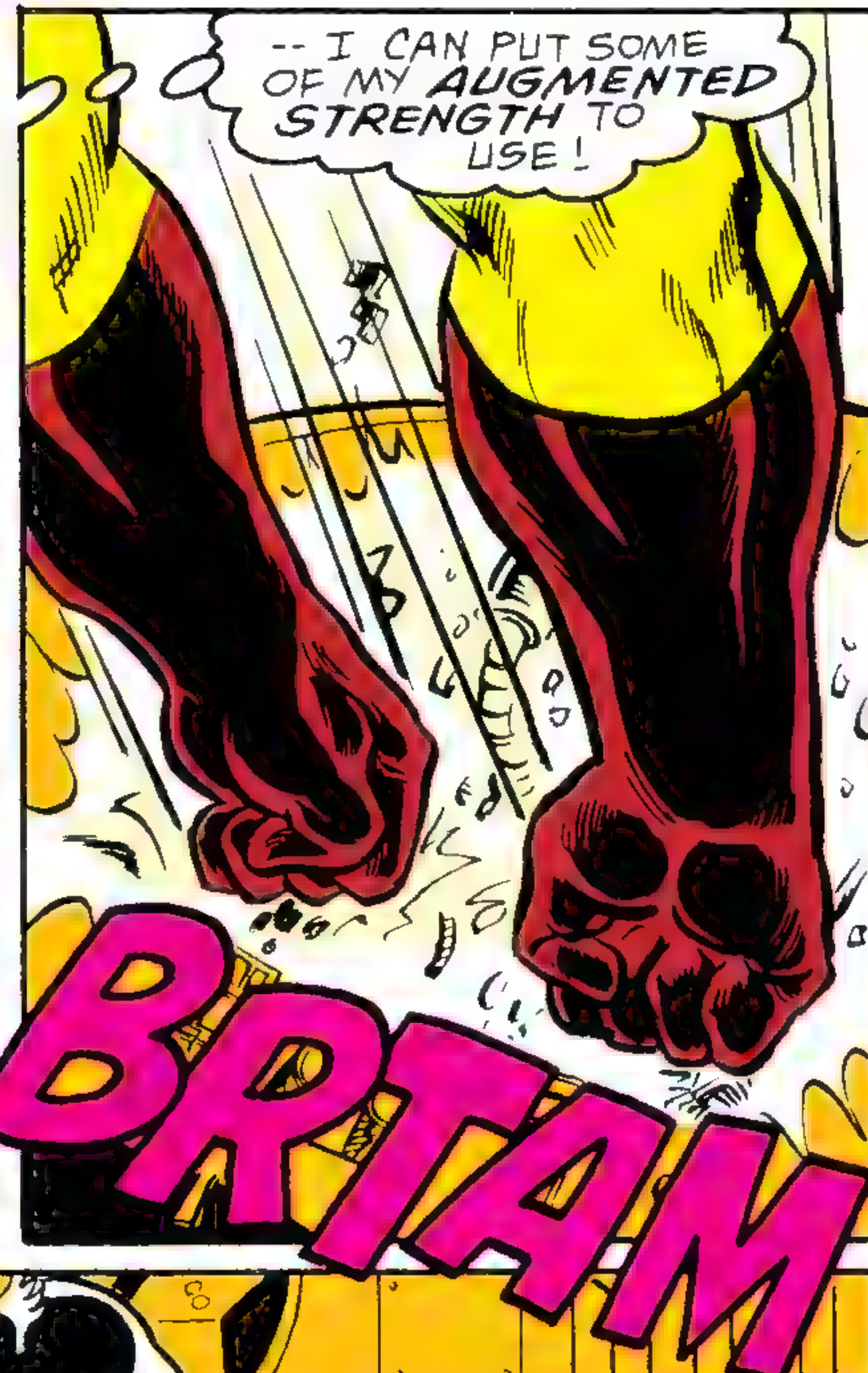
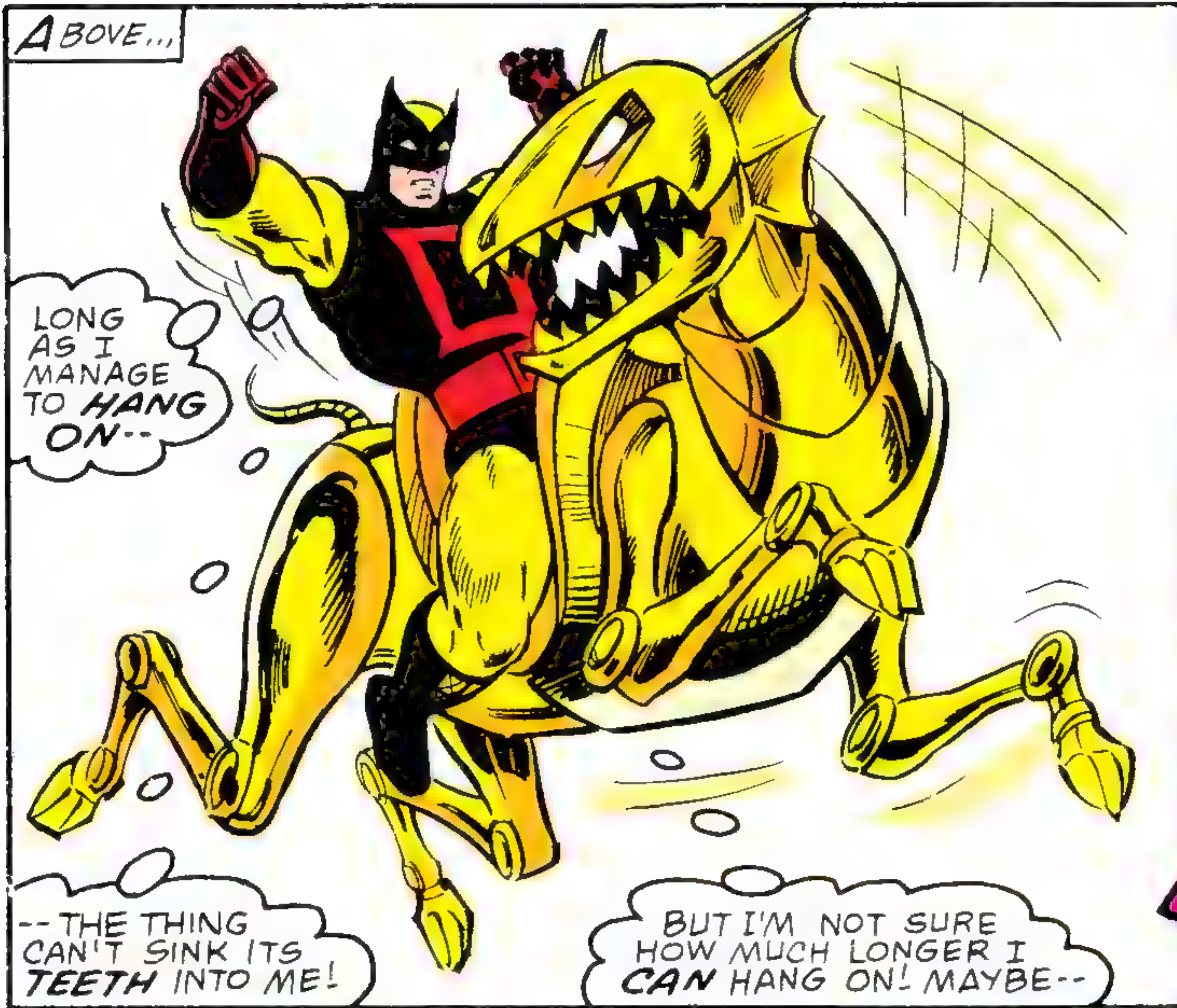
FAMINE RETURNS HER ATTENTION TO HER OTHER ADVERSARIES...

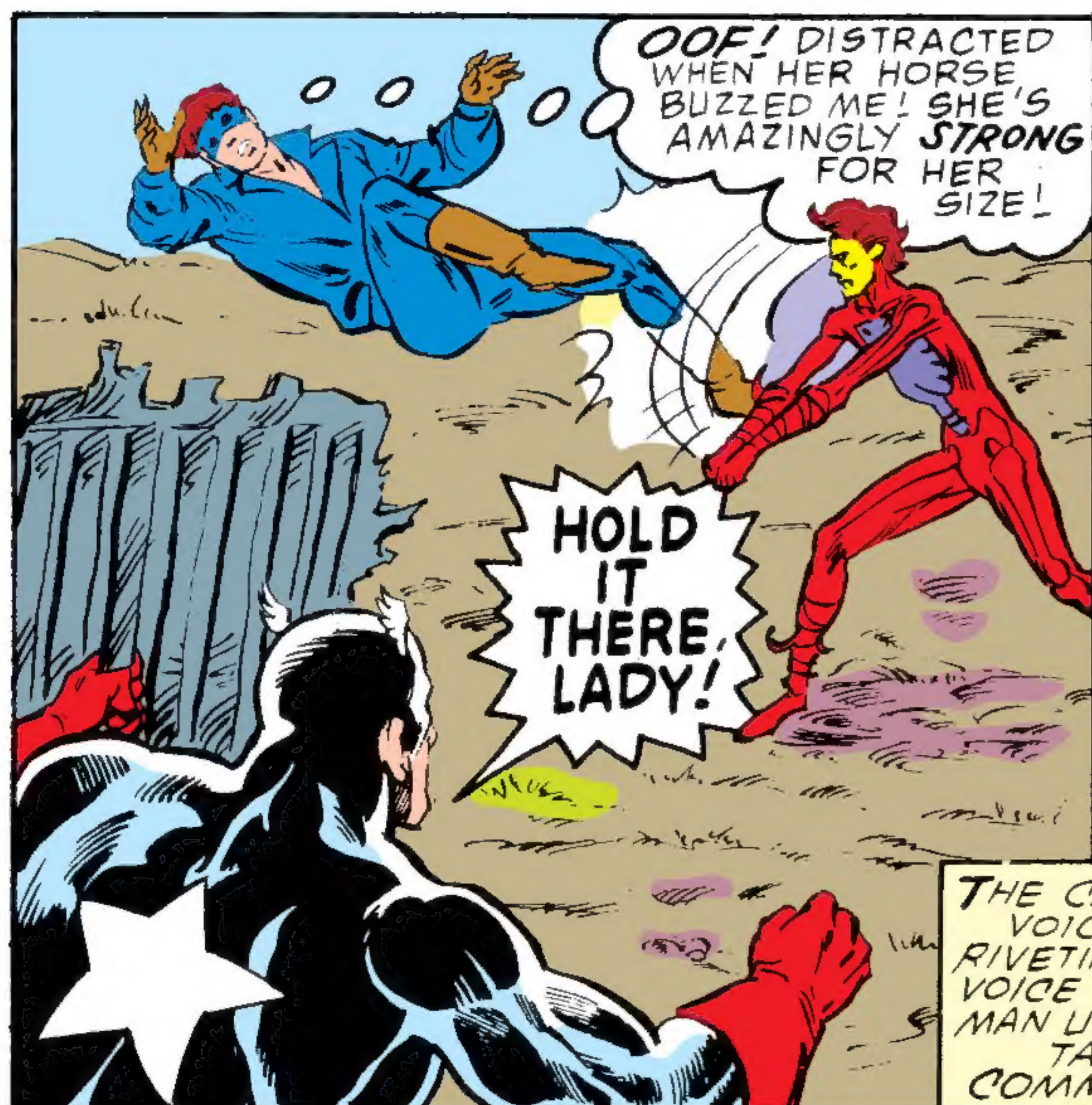
SO WEAK... FAMISHED--!

SAM--?

...CONFIDENT HER STEED CAN TAKE CARE OF ITSELF!



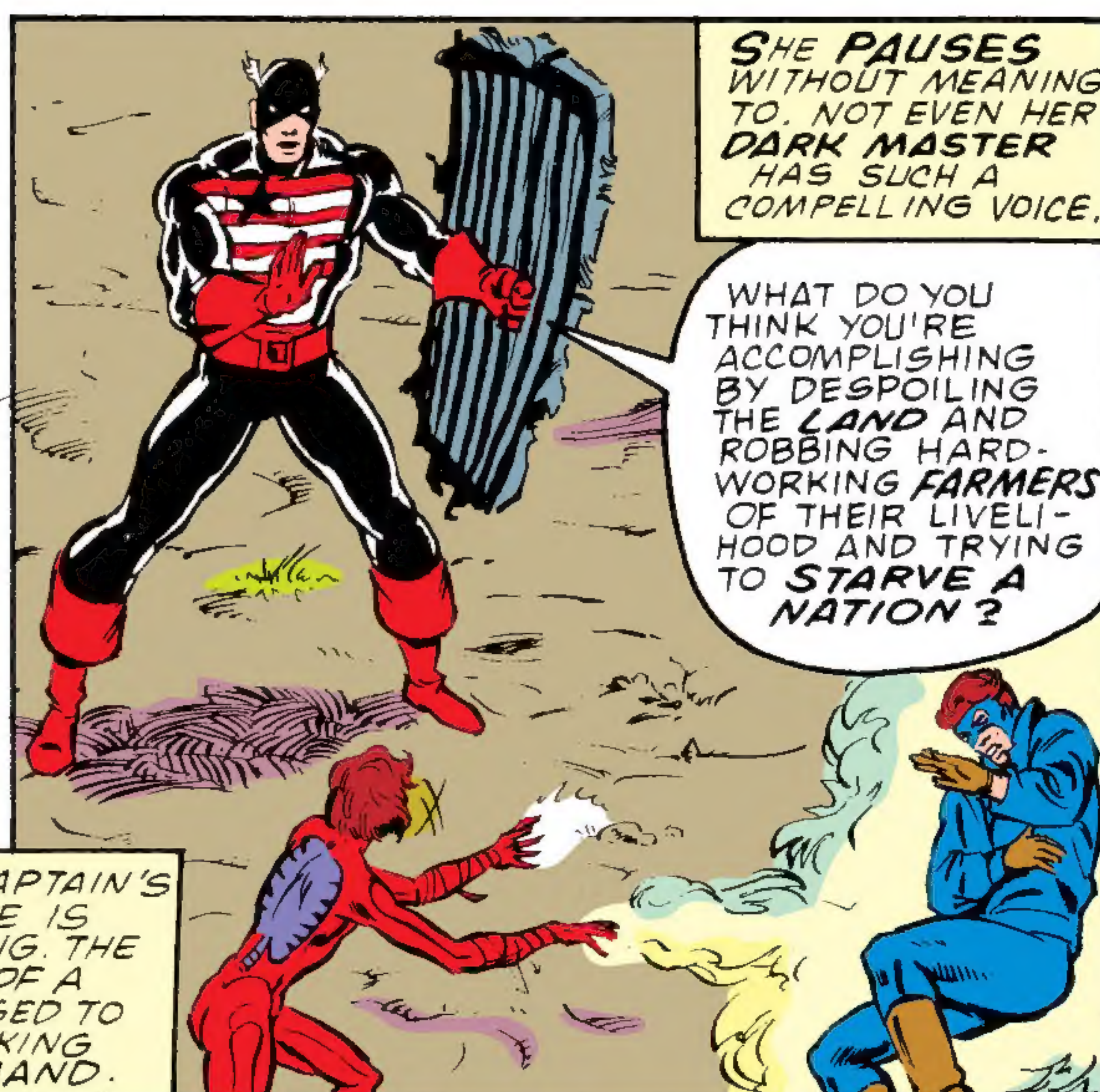




OOF! DISTRACTED WHEN HER HORSE BUZZED ME! SHE'S AMAZINGLY STRONG FOR HER SIZE!

HOLD IT THERE, LADY!

THE CAPTAIN'S VOICE IS RIVETING. THE VOICE OF A MAN USED TO TAKING COMMAND.



SHE PAUSES WITHOUT MEANING TO. NOT EVEN HER DARK MASTER HAS SUCH A COMPELLING VOICE.

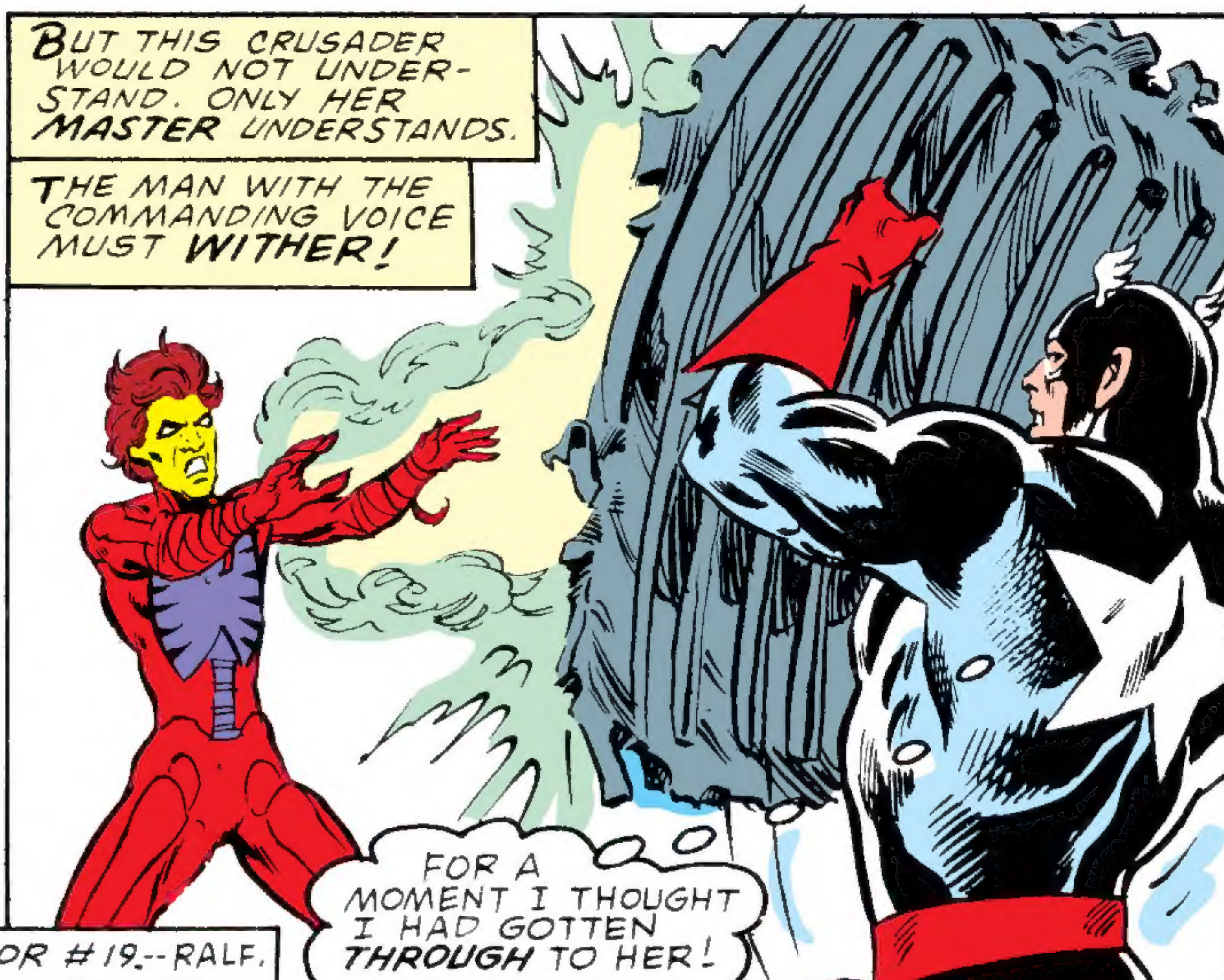
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE ACCOMPLISHING BY DESPOILING THE LAND AND ROBBING HARD-WORKING FARMERS OF THEIR LIVELIHOOD AND TRYING TO STARVE A NATION?



SHE ALMOST BEGINS TO ANSWER HIM... TO TELL HIM HOW SHE ABHORS FOOD AND CANNOT SWALLOW A SINGLE MORSEL WITHOUT IMMEDIATELY REGURGITATING IT...

...HOW HER MASTER-- APOCALYPSE-- FOUND HER AND MADE HER ONE OF HIS FOUR MUTANT HORSE-MEN AND BID HER DESTROY THAT WHICH MAKES HER SICK TO HER STOMACH! *

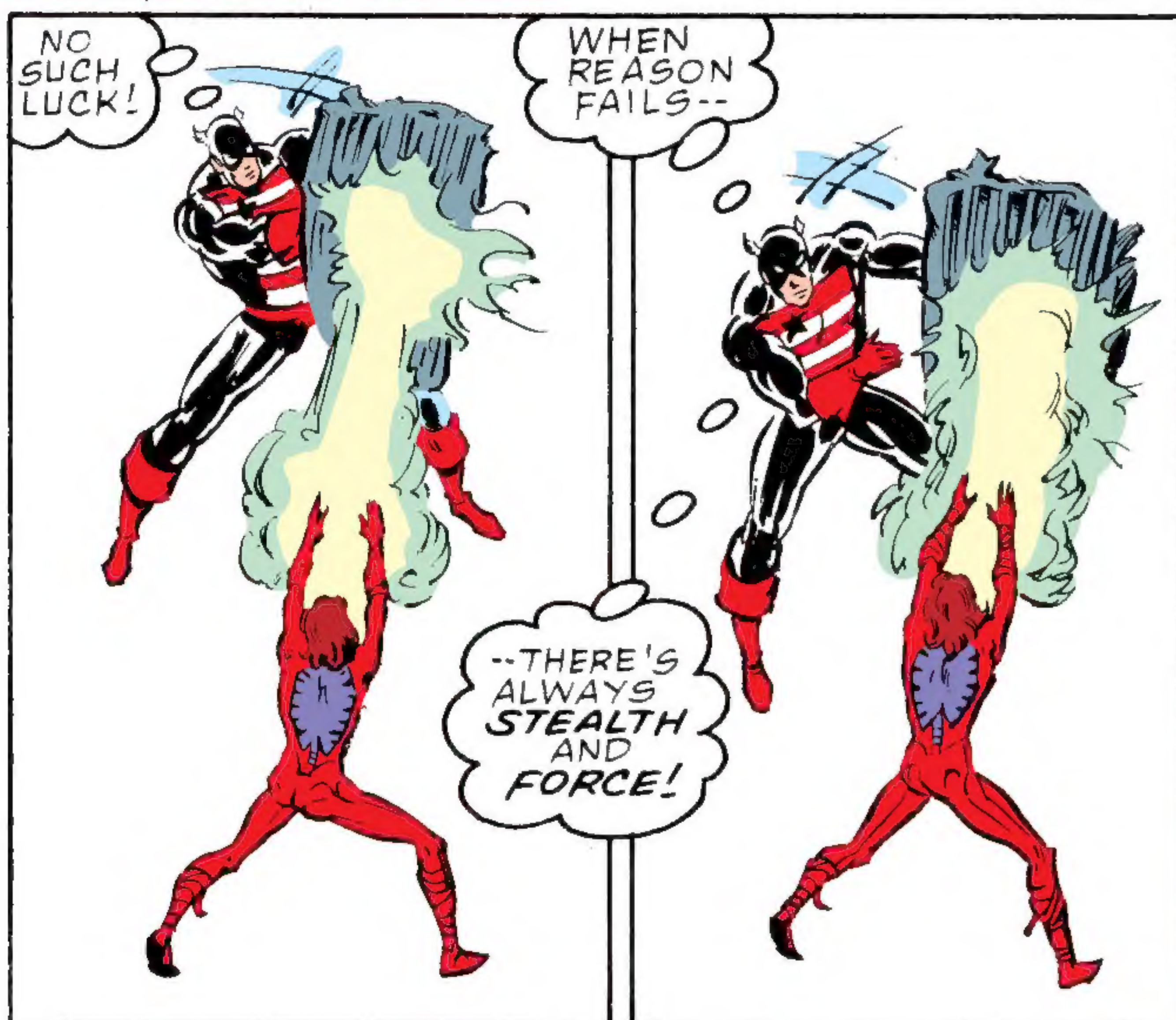
*SEE X-FACTOR #19--RALF.



BUT THIS CRUSADER WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND. ONLY HER MASTER UNDERSTANDS.

THE MAN WITH THE COMMANDING VOICE MUST WITHER!

FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT I HAD GOTTEN THROUGH TO HER!



NO SUCH LUCK!

WHEN REASON FAILS--

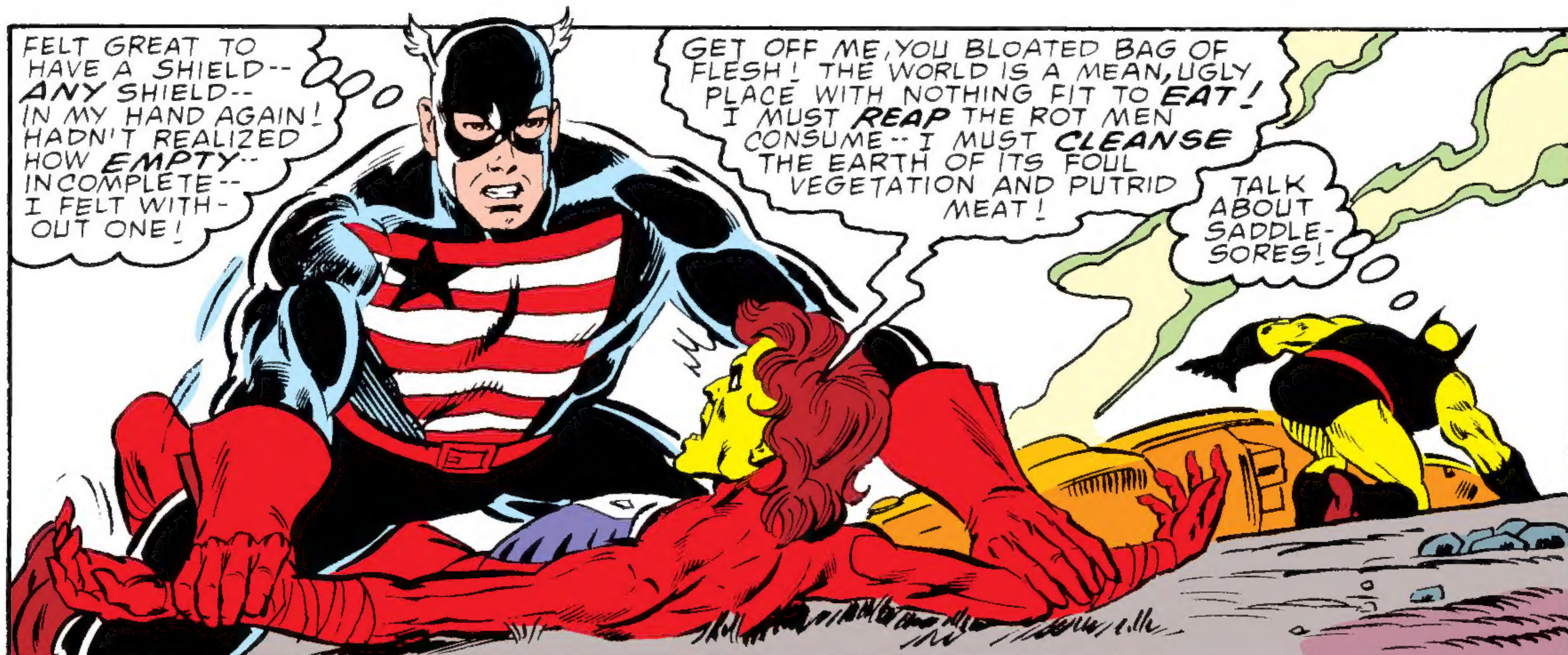
--THERE'S ALWAYS STEALTH AND FORCE!



OKAY, MISS-- YOUR MADNESS STOPS HERE!

BACON

YEOW!



FELT GREAT TO HAVE A SHIELD--
ANY SHIELD--
IN MY HAND AGAIN!
HADN'T REALIZED
HOW **EMPTY**--
INCOMPLETE--
I FELT WITH-
OUT ONE!

GET OFF ME, YOU BLOATED BAG OF FLESH! THE WORLD IS A MEAN, UGLY PLACE WITH NOTHING FIT TO **EAT**!
I MUST **REAP** THE ROT MEN CONSUME-- I MUST **CLEANSE** THE EARTH OF ITS FOUL VEGETATION AND PUTRID MEAT!

TALK ABOUT SADDLE-SORES!

NO, YOU MUST SEE A **PSYCHIATRIST**!

WHAT? SHE'S--!

VANISHED. I KNOW.

I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT FALCON AND NOMAD WILL RECOVER... BUT WHAT ABOUT **AMERICA**?

WHO CAN BIND THE WOUNDS OF THE **LAND**? FEED HER FAMISHED PEOPLE NOW? WHAT CAN I DO-- I WHO ONCE STYLED MYSELF A **SYMBOL** OF THIS LAND AND PEOPLE?

IT'S INFURIATING, FIRST THE SERPENTS, NOW THIS WOMAN. IT SEEMS EVERYONE I FIGHT THESE DAYS USES **TELEPORTATION**!

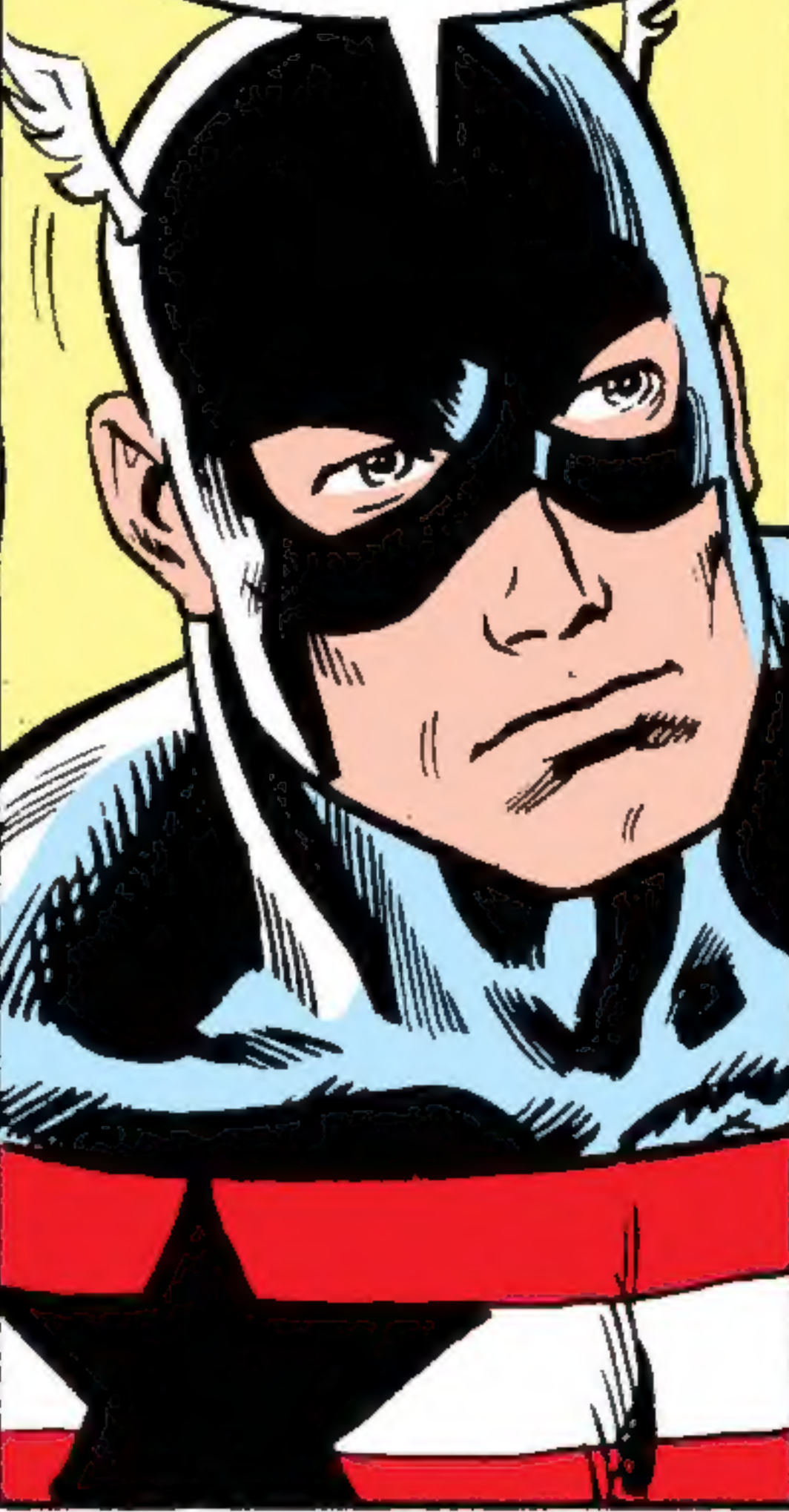
D-MAN! GO FETCH THE FALCON! I'LL SEE TO NOMAD!

THE KINSHIP I FEEL WITH AMERICA HASN'T DIMINISHED IN THE LEAST WITH MY... CHANGE IN UNIFORM.

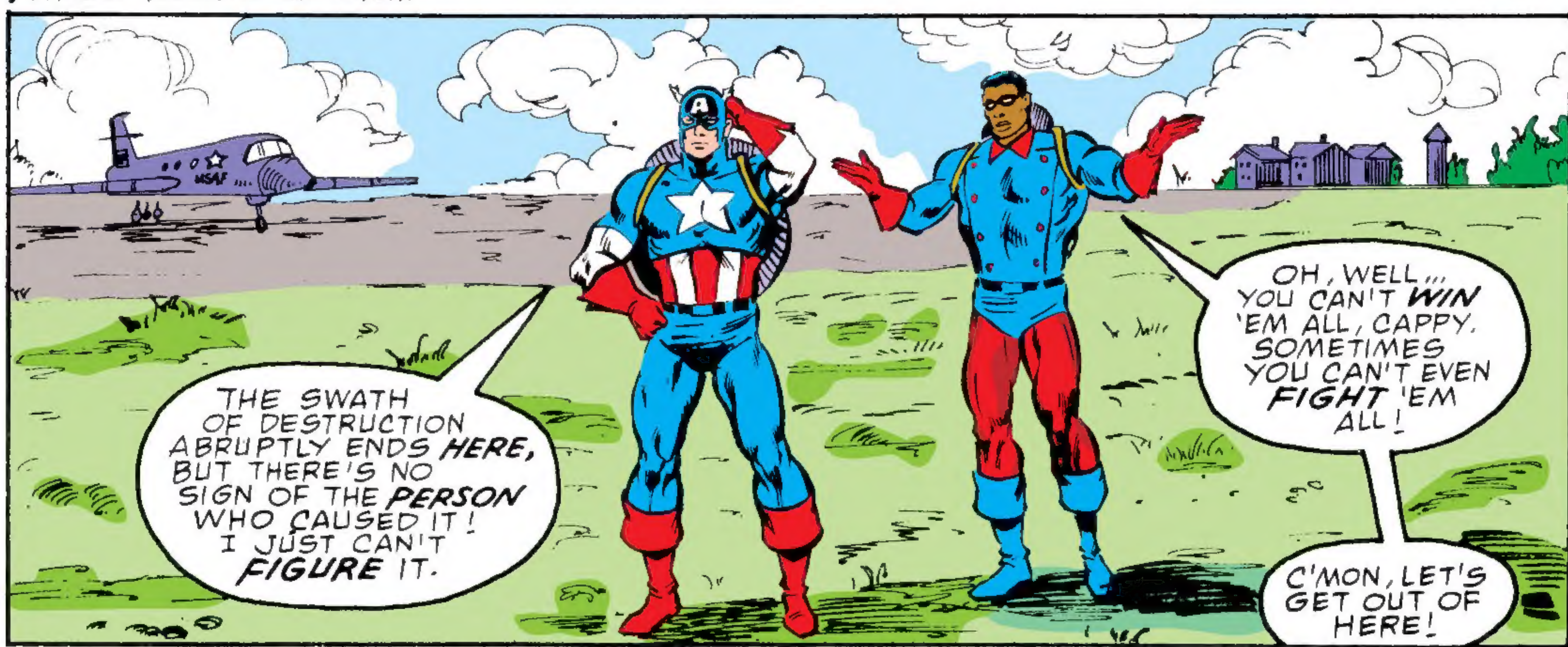


MAAASTERRR!

UH? CAP? THIS HORSE IS--



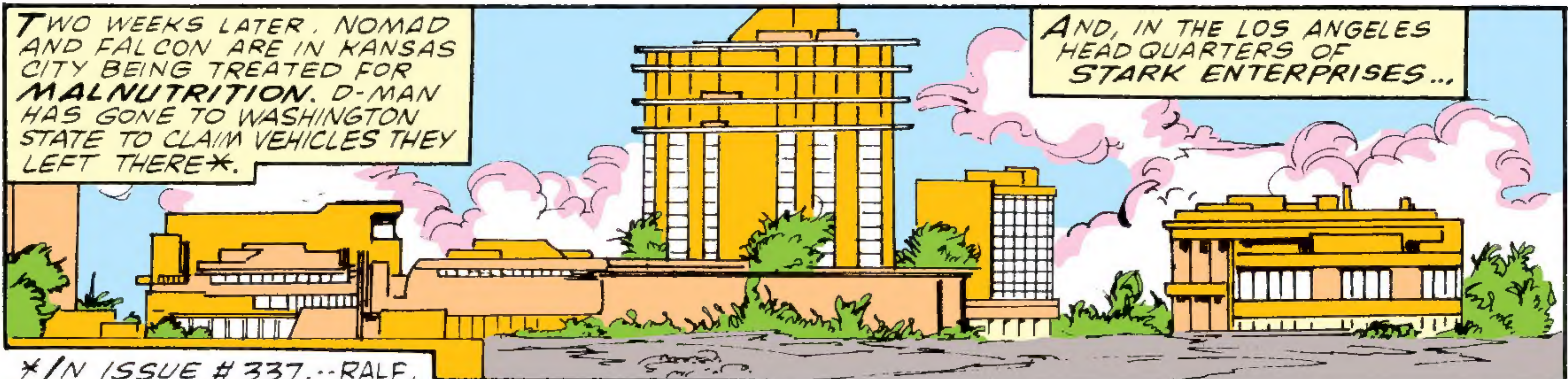
THREE HOURS LATER...



THE SWATH OF DESTRUCTION ABRUPTLY ENDS **HERE**, BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE **PERSON** WHO CAUSED IT! I JUST CAN'T **FIGURE** IT.

OH, WELL... YOU CAN'T **WIN** 'EM ALL, CAPPY. SOMETIMES YOU CAN'T EVEN **FIGHT** 'EM ALL!

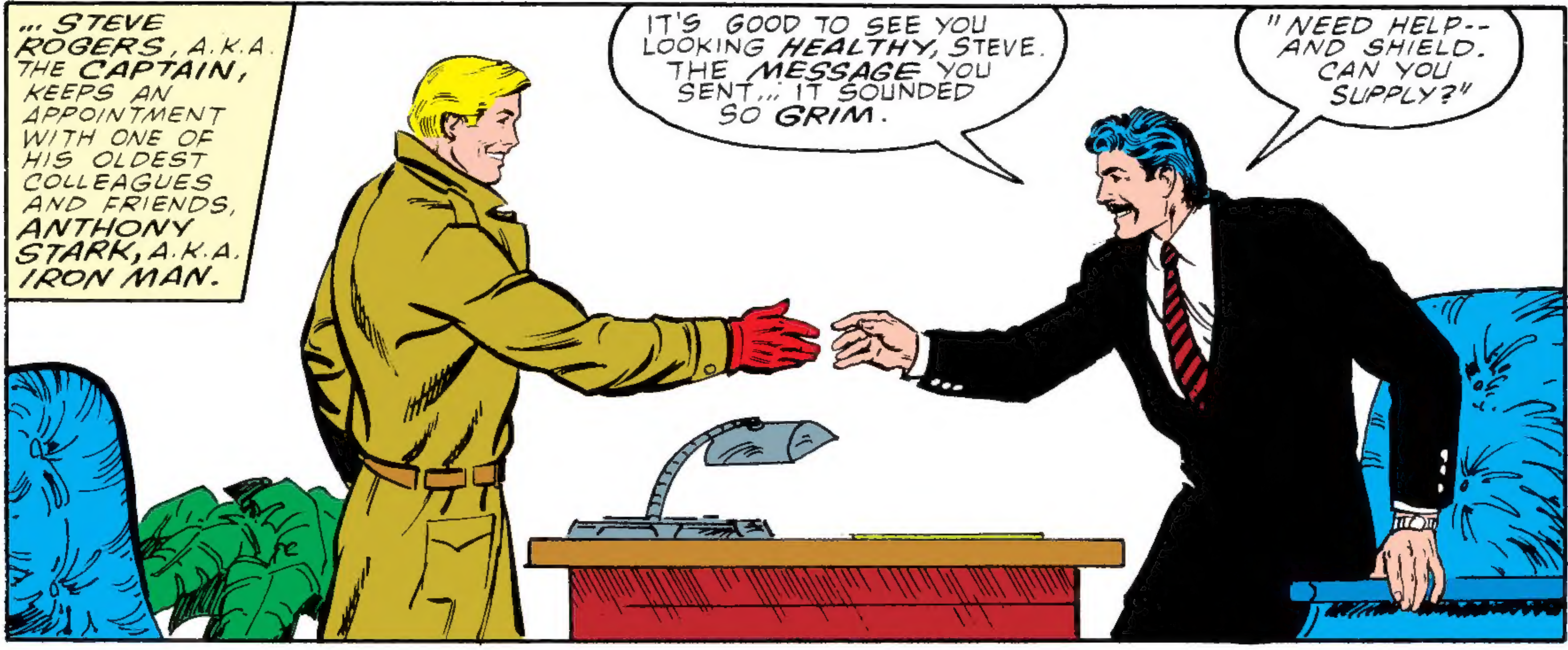
C'MON, LET'S GET OUT OF **HERE**!



TWO WEEKS LATER, NOMAD AND FALCON ARE IN KANSAS CITY BEING TREATED FOR MALNUTRITION. D-MAN HAS GONE TO WASHINGTON STATE TO CLAIM VEHICLES THEY LEFT THERE*.

AND, IN THE LOS ANGELES HEADQUARTERS OF STARK ENTERPRISES...

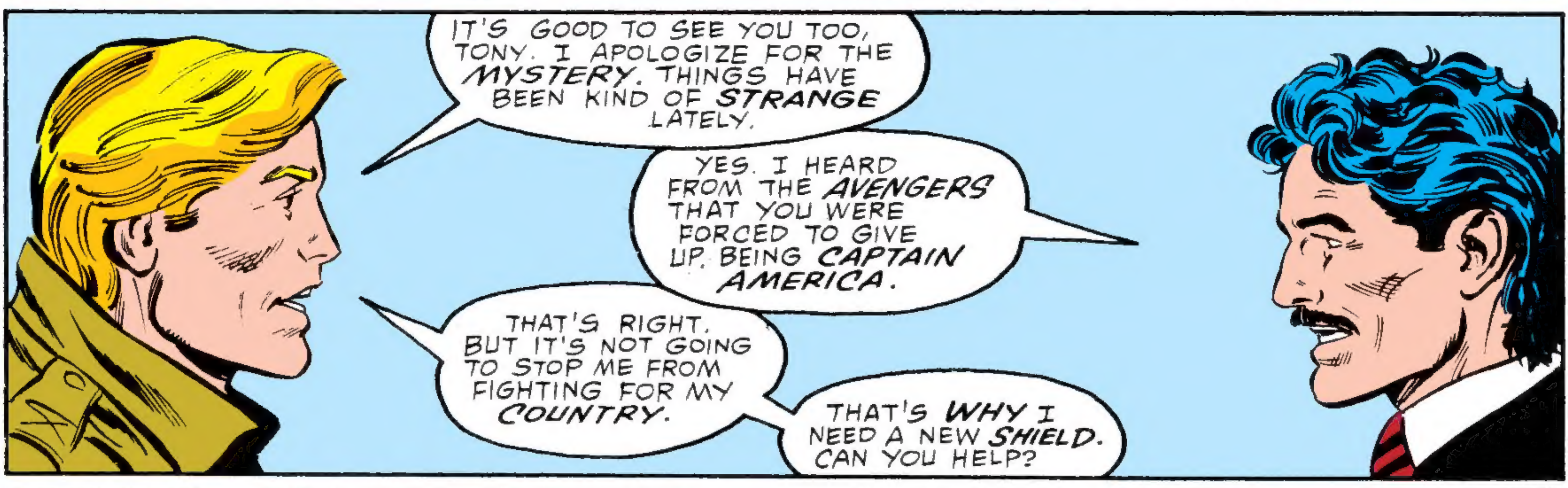
*/N ISSUE # 337...RALF.



... STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. THE CAPTAIN, KEEPS AN APPOINTMENT WITH ONE OF HIS OLDEST COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS, ANTHONY STARK, A.K.A. IRON MAN.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU LOOKING **HEALTHY**, STEVE. THE **MESSAGE** YOU SENT... IT SOUNDED SO **GRIM**.

"NEED HELP-- AND **SHIELD**. CAN YOU **SUPPLY**?"



IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, TONY. I APOLOGIZE FOR THE **MYSTERY**. THINGS HAVE BEEN KIND OF **STRANGE** LATELY.

YES. I HEARD FROM THE **AVENGERS** THAT YOU WERE FORCED TO GIVE UP. BEING **CAPTAIN AMERICA**.

THAT'S RIGHT. BUT IT'S NOT GOING TO STOP ME FROM FIGHTING FOR MY **COUNTRY**.

THAT'S **WHY** I NEED A NEW **SHIELD**. CAN YOU HELP?



I'M ALWAYS HAPPY TO HELP A **FRIEND**, STEVE. WHY DON'T WE TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR NEW **SHIELD**?

TELL ME SOMETHING, TONY. ON THE WAY OVER, I READ IN **NEWSWEEK** THAT YOU FIRED IRON MAN AS YOUR CORPORATE SYMBOL. WHAT'S THE **STORY**? HOW CAN YOU FIRE YOUR OWN **ALTER EGO**?



I'M REALLY SORRY, STEVE, BUT I CAN'T SHARE THAT SECRET WITH **ANYONE** JUST NOW.

BUT--!

WHY DON'T WE GO HAVE A LOOK AT THE **SHIELD** I MADE FOR YOU?

SOON...

